

SECRETARIAT

ACADEMIC POLICY SUMMARY SHEET

NAME OF ACADEMIC POLICY:	Admissions Policy
PURPOSE OF POLICY AND WHOM IT APPLIES TO:	<p>The policy sets out the guiding principles and procedures by which the University considers undergraduate applications to its programmes.</p> <p>The policy applies to all staff involved with undergraduate admissions and prospective students.</p>
RESPONSIBLE BOARD/ COMMITTEE WITH ROUTE OF APPROVAL:	Academic Board approved revised policy in June 2018.
LEAD STAFF MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS UPDATE:	Director of Student Affairs
PERSONS CONSULTED IN DEVELOPING POLICY:	The latest revised policy was considered by Academic Board in June 2018.
POLICY APPROVED BY:	Academic Board – June 2018
DATE OF ORIGINAL IMPLEMENTATION:	10 December 2008 and revised periodically
DETAIL OF DISSEMINATION:	The revised policy is available on the Secretariat's portal site.
PROPOSED DATE OF REVIEW	Annually
SECRETARIAT OFFICER – MAIN CONTACT:	Officer to Academic Affairs Committee
DATE:	September 2018



1.0 Introduction

The University welcomes diversity among its students and seeks to help each one to flourish academically and personally through its programmes. Admission, therefore, is governed by three principles:

- To recruit a diverse student body in terms of background and experience.
- To recruit students who are able to complete their programme as judged by their achievements and potential.
- To provide fair and equal access to those who have the potential to succeed.

2.0 Scope of the Policy

The University of Lincoln aims to provide a fair and transparent admissions system, which is implemented consistently and which provides equal opportunities for all, regardless of background.

The Admissions Policy complies with relevant legislation and is guided by the principles and precepts regarding good admissions practice set out by the Quality Assurance Agency UK Quality Code (Chapter B2) and the Schwartz Report on Fair Admissions 2004 and the Fair Admissions Task and Finish Group 2012.

The Admissions Policy is intended to provide information for applicants, their parents, guardians or advisors and for staff within the University, on the procedures and principles involved in making an application to the University.

3.0 Responsibility

Responsibility for oversight and changes to the University Admissions Policy in relation to admissions at undergraduate level lies with the University's Academic Board and is reviewed on an annual basis.

Overall responsibility for the undergraduate admissions process rests with the Director of Student Affairs. The University is committed to providing a professional admissions service and admissions activities are carried out by the University's central Student Administration department, academic Schools and by staff in partner institutions.

The Student Administration department's role is to ensure that policies and procedures in relation to student admission are operated fairly and consistently, in line with the University's strategic aims and objectives.

4.0 Information, Advice and Guidance for Applicants

The University is committed to providing high quality, accurate and up to date advice and guidance to its applicants.

The University gives careful consideration as to what information may be needed by applicants and advisors to make informed choices. It provides clear information for applicants on each programme in the University prospectus and on its website on:

- The content and delivery of its programmes.

- The application process.
- The academic entry requirements of each programme.
- The costs associated with study.
- Career opportunities post study.

5.0 General Academic Entry Requirements

The University welcomes applications from appropriately qualified students studying a wide range of qualifications.

Minimum entry requirements are reviewed on an annual basis in view of changing academic requirements. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in the University's prospectus is accurate. Occasionally, amendments may be made after the publication date and these will be publicised on the University's website.

The University therefore recommends that applicants use the information in the programme listings on our website (www.lincoln.ac.uk) as the source of the most up to date information on entry requirements.

Academic entry requirements are also published on the UCAS website at www.ucas.com. All programmes will clearly state their entry criteria, including academic qualifications, along with appropriate experience and skills required for entry.

In exceptional circumstances, the University reserves the right to exercise academic judgement and discretion when assessing prior achievement. In such cases, the University Registrar, or nominee, on the recommendation of the Head of College, may waive the programme entry requirements for a particular applicant.

5.1 Specific Requirements at GCSE or Equivalent

In addition to the above, individual Colleges and programmes within the University may set minimum entry requirements for levels of attainment at GCSE or equivalent, particularly in the subjects of English Language, Mathematics and Science. This information will be clearly stated within the entry requirements for specific programmes on the University's website.

5.2 English Language Requirements

Applicants whose first language is not English are required to produce evidence that they are competent in English language and the majority of programmes require at least GCSE English at grade C or:

- A satisfactory level in a University approved secure English Language Test, for example IELTS.
- Successful completion of the University's internal English Language Test.
- A higher education level award, delivered and assessed in English, by an institution recognised by the University of Lincoln.

In exceptional cases where there is alternative evidence of an acceptable level of English, the Head of College may waive the standard English Language competency requirement for a particular applicant. A written case shall be submitted to the relevant Head of College for approval and the performance of students admitted on this basis shall be reported to the relevant Academic Board Committee on an annual basis.

Applicants are advised to use the information on the International pages of the University's website for further clarification – www.lincoln.ac.uk/international.

5.3 Programme Specific Subjects

Whilst the University will normally consider a wide range of subjects as appropriate for entry, some programmes may specify particular subjects. General Studies and Critical Thinking A Levels are accepted for the majority, but not all programmes. This information will be clearly stated within the entry requirements for each programme on the University's website.

6.0 Additional Entry Requirements

6.1 Interviews and Portfolios

Interviews are not a pre-requisite for admission for the majority of undergraduate programmes. However, some Schools may request an interview or audition, particularly in the subjects of Health and Social Care, Sciences and Dance and Drama to further assess applications. In addition, Art, Architecture and Design programmes may request applicants provide a portfolio of work. The University will contact applicants who are required to attend an interview.

All interviews, auditions and portfolio viewings are scored and the outcomes of all interviews are fully documented.

Further details regarding the interview process are available on the programme specific pages of the University's website www.lincoln.ac.uk.

6.2 Admissions Tests

Most programmes within the University do not require applicants to participate in entrance tests. However, programmes such as Social Work and Nursing will normally require applicants to undertake a short internal numeracy/literacy test as part of the interview process.

6.3 Health Assessments

Admission to certain professional programmes such as Nursing and Social Work are subject to a satisfactory health assessment. Applicants will be requested to complete a confidential questionnaire as part of the application process.

6.4 Mature Applicants

The University welcomes applications from mature students and will give careful individual consideration to those who do not meet the standard entry requirements. The University will take into account any alternative qualifications or work experience applicants may have.

6.5 International Applicants

All Undergraduate international applicants should submit their application through the UK's Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).

The consideration of individual applications is undertaken centrally by the University's International Admissions Team, where specialist admissions staff review applications for the majority of undergraduate programmes. The International Admissions Team will set entry requirement equivalencies for international qualifications which will be implemented consistently for all programmes.

The equivalence of overseas qualifications will be assessed using UK NARIC, the national agency responsible for providing information, advice and expert opinion on international qualifications and skills.

6.6 UK Visas and Immigration Compliance

The University of Lincoln holds a Tier 4 Sponsor licence which enables the University to sponsor overseas students applying for a Tier 4 visa to study in the UK. The International Admissions Team works closely with the Tier 4 Compliance Team to ensure compliance with UK Visas and Immigration regulations.

The International Admissions Team is responsible for the issuing of Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) documentation to allow international applicants to apply for their visa to study in the UK. The University is not able to guarantee that an applicant who is issued a CAS will secure a visa. The applicant has responsibility for ensuring that all appropriate documentation is submitted in support of a visa application.

There may be times that the University will need to check the immigration history of an applicant before the CAS is issued.

As part of its sponsor duties, the University is required to keep copies of all international students' current passport, current and previous visas, original qualification documents, contact details and ATAS Certificate (if applicable).

The University of Lincoln reserves the right to cancel the CAS issued to an overseas applicant if the unconditional offer is retracted or if the offer is declined.

6.7 Non Standard Applicants

The University does not normally require applicants to provide additional written work to supplement their application, although in individual cases the University may request this and will explain the reasons for such a request.

7.0 The Application Process

7.1 The UCAS Procedure

All applications for entry onto full-time undergraduate programmes must be submitted through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). Part-time undergraduate applications should be submitted directly to the University, using the University's application form available on its website.

The University will send an acknowledgement email to all applicants on receipt of their application.

7.2 Decisions

7.2.1 Responsibility for Decisions

The University is committed to providing a professional admissions service to its applicants. The consideration of individual applications is usually undertaken centrally by the Student Administration department, where specialist admissions staff review applications for the majority of undergraduate programmes.

Academic Schools remain involved in the process and are responsible for agreeing entry requirements for each programme. In addition, Academic Schools will determine whether or not an interview/audition/portfolio is required as part of the selection process.

7.2.2 Assessing Suitability

The University will admit students from a wide range of backgrounds who can demonstrate their potential to successfully complete the programme.

When assessing an applicant's suitability for a particular programme, the University will normally consider:

- Academic qualifications (both achieved and yet to be completed).
- A personal statement.
- A reference that can comment on the academic potential of the applicant and their suitability for study at degree level.
- Prior academic achievement or experiential learning where appropriate.

7.2.3 Making Decisions

In reaching a decision the University will:

- Ensure that all decisions are fair and consistent in relation to the published entry criteria.
- Ensure that staff who make the decisions are appropriately qualified and trained.
- Communicate all decisions clearly and in a timely manner.

7.3 Offers

Full-time undergraduate applicants who have received an offer will be able to view the decision on-line using UCAS Track in the first instance. In addition, the University will send an email to all applicants confirming this offer.

7.4 Unsuccessful Applicants

If applicants are unsuccessful in their original application, the University may decide to make an offer on an alternative programme. Once approval has been sought from the applicant, the change of offer will be communicated via UCAS (for full-time undergraduate applicants only) and in writing by the University.

Applicants who are unsuccessful in gaining an offer of a place on the programme are entitled to feedback and will be able to view the reason for rejection on UCAS Track. All other requests should be made within 14 days of receiving the University's decision. These requests should be in writing, either by email or letter and be addressed to: The Head of Student Administration, Student Administration, University of Lincoln, Brayford Pool, Lincoln LN6 7TS.

7.5 Assessment of Tuition Fee Status

The University uses information given in the UCAS application to determine the level of tuition fee payable by applicants. Fees are classed as either Home (UK students), European Union (EU students), Channel Islands or Overseas (International students).

In addition, the University will ensure eligibility is consistent with the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) guidance when determining overseas fees.

The University will contact applicants if further information is needed to determine the fee.

7.6 Late Applications

Applicants who apply by the UCAS deadline of the 15th January will receive full and equal consideration. Applications after this date will be considered on an individual basis if there are vacancies available on the relevant programme.

7.7 Deferred Entry

For the majority of programmes applicants may request deferred entry to the following academic year. Should an applicant wish to defer their year of entry once an offer of study has been made, they should contact the University who will, wherever possible, amend the offer start date.

Deferred entry is not available for Nursing or Social Work programmes.

7.8 Transferring from other Universities

Undergraduate students wishing to transfer to the University of Lincoln from another university should apply through UCAS. Consideration for entry into the second or third year will be dependent upon the content of and achievement in previous studies.

7.9 Accreditation of Prior Learning

Applicants may be admitted to programmes at a higher stage than the normal entry point if they can demonstrate either sufficient accredited learning (for example from previous qualifications or part-qualifications) or sufficient and appropriate experience or training. The point at which they enter the programme will depend upon the level and range of their previous achievement.

Under the National Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme, students may transfer appropriate credits gained from other programmes, universities or colleges. Students transferring such credits will not have to re-take elements for which they have already gained credit, providing that the credit is accepted as appropriate for the programme to which they are transferring. Students with credits which are less directly appropriate may be required to take additional credits to meet the learning outcomes of their new programme.

Applicants may also enter a programme at a higher than normal entry level on the basis of either previous learning through experience or of non-credit bearing qualifications, provided that they can provide sufficient and robust evidence that such previous learning can take the place of entry-level learning for the programme in question. These students will also not have to re-take elements in which they can clearly demonstrate knowledge and competence, and will be exempted from them.

In all cases, any entitlement to advanced standing admission must be established before enrolment. Further information is available in the Accreditation of Prior Learning and Student Handbook.

7.10 Admission on the Basis of Previous Learning through Experience

The University will admit students on the basis of previous learning through experience provided it can be substantiated on application, is relevant to the award applied for and provides sufficient evidence of the applicant's ability to benefit from the award.

Each applicant is responsible for making the claim of knowledge and skills achieved through experience and for providing adequate supporting evidence. If an applicant without formal qualifications is applying for the entry level of an award the application must be supported by sufficient evidence of relevant experience, commitment to the subject and ability to

undertake an academic qualification. The University will advise applicants individually of what is necessary.

Learning through experience can also be the basis for admission with advanced standing. This entails matching the applicant's experience against the learning outcomes of specific sections of the chosen programme, and is a more complex procedure. Again, the University will advise applicants of the process and, without prejudice to the final decision, whether they have a likely case for making such an application.

7.11 Applicants Declaring Criminal Convictions

As part of the applications process, applicants to certain programmes, including those in healthcare related programmes, applied bio-medical science and pharmacy, which are subject to further declarations arising from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, are required to declare the existence and nature of any criminal convictions, cautions or current disciplinary proceedings against them.

If the programme of study is likely to bring the applicant into contact with children or vulnerable adults, then 'spent' criminal convictions must be declared on application. In such cases information will be sought regarding all cautions and convictions.

All applicants first pass through the standard selection process which ignores the conviction and makes an assessment of suitability on academic grounds alone.

Once an application has been accepted on academic grounds, applicants will be required to provide further information in relation to the conviction, which will be considered by the School's Fitness to Practice Panel. Details of the Fitness to Practice Panel's constituency and role can be found in the relevant section of the University's General Regulations.

In making any decision, the Panel must consider the University's duty of care to its students and staff and the need to safeguard its property. The Panel's decision is final and is based on the relevance or otherwise of the conviction to either the programme or the University in the light of its assessment of the risks involved.

Applicants who are convicted of a criminal offence between applying for a place and enrolling on their programme must inform the University immediately. The conviction will be considered through the process described above.

Programmes that involve direct contact with children or vulnerable adults will require applicants to undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check prior to the start of the programme. Students may be asked to withdraw from the programme if they are found to have a criminal record which was not previously declared at the point of application.

The University reserves the right to withdraw any offer of admission to an applicant, or to terminate the enrolment of a student who has not declared a criminal conviction.

7.12 Applicants with Disabilities, Medical Conditions or Specific Learning Differences

The University recognises that students with disabilities, medical conditions or specific learning differences, are an integral part of the academic community and makes every effort to meet the needs of these applicants. It cannot, however, guarantee to meet those needs in every case.

All applications are first considered on their academic merits through the standard selection process. The University sends information on its services to all applicants offered a place on the course and who have disclosed a disability, medical condition or learning difference. A

member of the Student Wellbeing team may contact an applicant to discuss their individual needs.

7.13 Plagiarism in Personal Statements

All personal statements supporting applications to higher education processed through UCAS are checked with a specially developed version of a similarity detection system. UCAS notifies both the applicant and the University in all cases of potential plagiarism.

The University will review each case and where appropriate, request that the applicant submits a new personal statement. The University reserves the right to reject an application on the basis of plagiarism.

8.0 Responsibilities of Applicants

Applicants are responsible for providing full and accurate information in an application and for notifying the University of any changes or corrections to their original application.

When accepting an offer of admission, applicants agree to abide by the University's regulations.

If additional information is made available after selection, the University reserves the right to amend, or, in exceptional circumstances, withdraw the offer. The University also reserves the right to amend errors made in the communication of decisions and offers.

9.0 Confirmation of Offers

Confirmation is the process by which universities receive applicants' examination results. If an applicant achieves the requirements of their conditional offer, their place will be confirmed. Applicants who have not met the entry requirements will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Examination results, the interview (if appropriate) and any other relevant factors will be taken into account. In some cases, the University may decide to make an offer on an alternative programme. The approval of the applicant will be sought, prior to any change.

All conditions of offers must be met by 31 August to guarantee a place for entry in the year of application.

The University will notify successful applicants via UCAS Track and by letter confirming their place.

10.0 Admissions Appeals Procedure

The University will always endeavour to process applications carefully, and to assess each application fairly and equally. It does, however, recognise that some applicants might be dissatisfied about the way in which their application was processed, or about a decision not to be offered a place. In these circumstances an applicant may wish to appeal the University's decision.

An applicant who believes that their application has not been handled appropriately through the admissions process should, in the first instance, write to: The Head of Student Administration, Student Administration, University of Lincoln, Brayford Pool, Lincoln, LN6 7TS. The applicant should set out, in writing, why they believe the University should have made a different decision and submit any evidence or documentation in support of their claim.

The purpose of this process is to ensure that fair and equal treatment has been given to all applicants and that each application has been processed consistently and in line with the University's policies. The Head of Student Administration will review the outcome and will evaluate this against other cases to ensure consistency in decisions. The Head of Student Administration will respond to the applicant in writing within 10 working days of receipt of their appeal.

If, following review, applicants still believe their application has not been through due process or that they have been treated unfairly, they should write to: The University Secretary, Secretariat, University of Lincoln, Brayford Pool, Lincoln, LN6 7TS, who will appoint a senior member of staff from outside Registry to review the issues raised by the applicant.

The appointed member of staff will review the processes undertaken to date to ensure that appropriate procedures have been followed and that the applicant has been treated fairly. The reviewer will respond to the applicant with the outcome within 10 working days of the referral. The reviewer's decision will be final.

This procedure shall not apply in cases where the University has declined to offer a place to an applicant on the grounds that he/she has failed to meet the stipulated minimum entry requirements for the programme, or because the programme is already fully subscribed.

11.0 Privacy Statement

The University of Lincoln will obtain and process personal data in order to perform and manage its operations, provide services and fulfil specific legal requirements.

For further information, please read the University's Privacy Statement:

<https://www.lincoln.ac.uk/home/abouttheuniversity/governance/universitypolicies/websiteandpublicationsinformationliability/>