



UCL Academic Manual

Chapter 1: Admissions, Registration and Student Conduct

Annex 1.1.2

Graduate Admissions Policy

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Policy

Equal Opportunities

1. UCL is firmly committed to promoting equal opportunity. UCL's Equal Opportunities policy in respect of student recruitment and admissions is as follows:
2. In the recruitment and selection of students the only consideration must be that the individual meets, or is likely to meet, the requirements of the programme or course. These requirements being met, no applicant will be discriminated against on the basis of their gender, race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality (within current legislation), disability, sexual orientation, marital status, caring or parental responsibilities, age, or beliefs on any matters such as religion and politics.
3. The above policy must be adhered to in all matters concerning student recruitment and admissions. UCL is committed to a programme of action to ensure that its policy is implemented and monitored at an organisational and individual level. Each department has a Departmental Equal Opportunities Liaison Officer who disseminates information on good practice and training.

Authority to Admit Students

4. UCL Statutes vest with the Provost the power to admit as a student to UCL anyone having the qualifications required for admission as stipulated in UCL Regulations. The Statutes further grant the Provost the power to delegate his power

to admit students to any Officer of UCL or other person or body as he may think fit. The arrangements for the admission of students as outlined in this and other sections of the Academic Manual present the current position as regards the delegation of the Provost's power to admit students. The Provost reserves the right, at any time, to delegate the power to admit students to other Officers of UCL, persons or bodies deemed suitable by him should any particular circumstances require it.

Application Process

5. Applicants are expected to apply on-line to UCL programmes. However, if making an on-line application is not possible, applicants can download an application form and submit it via hardcopy. Information on how to apply is available at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/graduate-study>. There is a standard application fee of £75 for on-line applications and £100 for a hard copy application. Higher application fees apply to some programmes.

6. Applicants applying via hard copy are asked to return, with their application forms, signed and sealed envelopes containing their references and transcripts relating to relevant qualifications. This procedure is intended to expedite the admissions process. If applying on-line, references and transcripts are submitted with the electronic application. Applicants applying on-line will not have their applications progressed until both references have been uploaded from their referees and a valid transcript is received.

7. Admissions acts as the point of receipt of most graduate applications. Applicants to the Doctorates in Clinical Psychology, Educational and Child Psychology and Educational Psychology are made via clearing house arrangements. Applications for the UCL School of Energy and Resources, Australia are made directly to the School. All applications are acknowledged by e-mail or letter. At the point of acknowledgement, applicants are invited to register and login to the UCL Applicant Portal. The acknowledgement advises the applicant of his/her application number. Admissions checks whether the application has been received complete. If it has, the acknowledgement will indicate the date by which the applicant should expect to receive a response to their application. Should the application be received incomplete or documents have not been uploaded in a readable format, the acknowledgement will indicate which documents are missing or illegible.

8. Information contained in the disability and ethnic origin monitoring form is recorded on the admissions database. Paper monitoring forms are then submitted for confidential waste disposal. The information on an applicant's ethnicity and disability status is not passed to the admissions selector.

9. Admissions selection processes vary across departments depending on how centralised the process is. For those departments and faculties where admissions is centralised, filtering and selection takes place in Admissions using selection criteria developed with the departmental admission tutors. Where a decision can be made,

a recommendation to either (i) accept unconditionally (ii) accept subject to specified conditions being satisfied or (iii) reject will be taken. Where a decision cannot be made, applications are referred to the departmental Admissions Tutor for a recommendation.

10. For those departments and faculties that are currently de-centralised, normally, after initial consideration by central admissions staff to assess a candidate's acceptability/possible acceptability with reference to programme entry requirements, applications are forwarded to the relevant Departmental Admissions Tutor for consideration. Alternative arrangements are in place for the Faculty of Laws and for research applications to the Faculty of Engineering Sciences. On the basis of the information given on the application and gathered through the selection process, the Admissions Tutor normally marks each application with a recommendation to either (i) accept unconditionally (ii) accept subject to specified conditions being satisfied or (iii) reject. The application is then returned to the Admissions Office for checking and processing.

11. Applications for admission are assessed by members of the academic staff or trained administrators. For research applications, the departmental research admissions tutor receives the application materials and either circulates them among individual academic colleagues, or to a research application review panel, as appropriate. The potential supervisor will normally interview the candidate to discuss research topics and methods, either face-to-face or by telephone, or correspond with the candidate.

12. Departments offering applicants fully-funded places at UCL are responsible for ensuring that funding is available for the duration of the programme of study. The policy setting out the levels of support which must be offered to research students who are being offered financial support to undertake a research degree at UCL is available at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/scholarships/staff-info>.

13. Departments with MPhil/PhD programmes or MRes programmes falling under the Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) are required to provide a research statement to Admissions prior to the preparation of the offer letter. The research statement and additional information required to obtain an ATAS certificate are included in the offer of admission that is sent to the applicant. For taught Masters (and MRes) programmes falling under the ATAS scheme, Admissions provides a complete list of available modules for the programme to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Information on ATAS is available at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/iss/immigration-visa/atas>

14. All offers of admission should conform to UCL's standard graduate programme entrance requirements, any additional programme-specific requirements and UCL's English language proficiency requirement.

15. Research students are normally offered admission to read for the degree of MPhil in the first instance with the expectation of being upgraded to PhD status. The

upgrading of a student to PhD status is made having regard to UCL's regulations and guidelines.

16. All formal offers of admission are prepared by Admissions. The Registrar has the authority to admit graduate students and all offer letters are signed only by the Registrar. The decision and offer text is viewable on the UCL Applicant Portal and a hardcopy of the offer letter is also sent to the applicant. Rejections are notified to the applicant by Admissions via the Applicant Portal. All applicants must receive a decision. Reasons for rejection are not normally provided for graduate programmes. Formal offers of admission are binding. Except in cases of fraud or where the Criminal Records Declaration Assessment Panel recommend it, an offer of admission cannot be withdrawn.

17. Before an offer letter is signed, Admissions staff ensure that the conditions specified by the admissions tutor or selector satisfy UCL regulations. An assessment of the applicant's fee status is also made for inclusion on the offer letter; the letter also states the tuition fee for the programme (provided the applicant is commencing the programme at the start of an academic year and the level of tuition fee for the programme has been approved by the Finance Committee) and any additional fee element that might be required for the programme of study.

18. Replies to offers are made via the Applicant Portal. All applicants are asked to reply within four weeks of the receipt of an offer. However, unless a specific date for replies has been imposed by the department and included in the offer letter, offers awaiting a reply are not cancelled. Replies to offers are acknowledged by Admissions.

19. Admissions also acts as the point of receipt of requests from applicants to defer their admission. If the deferral is approved, a new offer letter indicating the new starting date will be issued by Admissions. Deferrals are granted for one year only. If an applicant is unable to enrol in the following academic session, they are required to submit a new application.

20. During the Summer, a status email confirming the candidate's details is sent. At this time, applicants holding unconditional offers are required to verify their qualifications. Admissions are responsible for issuing certificates of acceptance to international students in line with the requirements of Tier 4 (Students) of the Points-Based Immigration System (PBIS). Please see <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/iss/immigration-visa>.

21. Special administrative arrangements are made for the receipt of applications to the DClinPsy in Clinical Psychology, Educational and Child Psychology and Educational Psychology, the UCL School of Energy and Resources, Australia and for applications received via the British Council.

Interviewing

22. UCL does not standardly interview its graduate taught applicants. Departments seeking to interview such applicants must have permission of the Vice Provost (Education and Student Affairs).

23. An interview is a meeting with an applicant for admission as a student that takes place only once it has been established that the applicant meets, or is likely to meet, UCL's entry requirements and is used only for selection purposes and not solely as a means of recruitment.

24. Interviews should be conducted by a minimum of two members of staff, both of whom have been trained in interviewing and equal opportunity awareness.

25. If it is deemed that an interview is required for a group of applicants, then all applicants in this group should be interviewed regardless of their place of residence. Applicants living in exempted areas of the UK as well as overseas (in other EU countries or elsewhere) may be interviewed by telephone or Skype rather than in person. Technology, such as OVIA interviews, can be used instead of other formats of interview.

26. An agreed line and level of questioning should be adopted and questions must be relevant to entry criteria. Supplementary questions should be used to probe for further information or clarification where answers are incomplete or ambiguous. Interviews should be assessed against predetermined criteria which are consistently applied throughout the whole admissions cycle.

27. The interviewers should keep a set of notes between or among themselves to help them reach an informed decision based on the content of the interview. Interview notes should relate to how candidates demonstrate their knowledge, skills, experience and abilities in relation to the entry criteria. All interview notes should be uploaded to UCLSelect. Under the Data Protection Act, access to interview notes must be given to applicants who request it.

Graduate Entrance Requirements

28. Taught - Offers of admission for taught programmes are made on the basis of the possession of a first degree at lower second class honours level (or its equivalent) as a minimum. Many programmes have a higher requirement, as specified in the on-line prospectus at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/graduate/taught/degrees>.

29. Research - Offers of admission for research programmes are made on the basis of the possession of a first degree at upper second class honours level (or its equivalent) as a minimum. Many programmes have a higher requirement as specified in the on-line prospectus at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/graduate/research>.

30. All candidates must satisfy any specific requirements that may be prescribed for the programme on to which he/she is to be admitted. Staff and prospective students can contact Admissions for advice on the equivalence of overseas qualifications. Detailed information for UCL staff on overseas entry requirements can be found at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/srs/pgadmissions/qualifications>.

Additional requirements for entry to courses of Initial Teacher Education

31. Applicants undertaking any course of initial teacher education must meet the Secretary of State's requirements for physical and mental fitness to teach. This will be assessed by an (or UCL's) Occupational Health Provider through completion of a health questionnaire and, if necessary, a face-to-face assessment. Applicants are responsible for bearing the cost of this assessment.

32. Applicants undertaking the Primary or Secondary PGCE, including those on the School Direct route, must pass the required Skills Tests prior to the start of the programme. Applicants who do not pass the Skills Tests before the start of the programme will not be permitted to enrol.

33. Applicants who accept an offer of a place on an initial teacher education course must be in possession of satisfactory clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service prior to the start of the programme, and must also comply with any additional safeguarding requirements in operation at the time of the programme. The applicant is responsible for applying for and bearing the cost of obtaining this disclosure and the process will be undertaken via the Institute of Education. For students on other courses, please see paragraph 63.

English Language Proficiency Requirement

34. Command of the English language is considered essential for all UCL programmes. All graduate (and undergraduate) applicants whose first language is not English must provide recent evidence that they have an adequate command of both spoken and written English. The complete policy on UCL's English Language proficiency requirements can be viewed at [**UCL's English Language Proficiency Requirement**](#) of the Academic Manual.

35. Please also refer to [**Qualifications Recognised by UCL for the Purpose of Satisfying the Graduate English Language Proficiency Requirement**](#) for more details.

Suspension of Regulations/Qualifying Examination/Qualifying Year

36. Admissions tutors wishing to accept a candidate who does not satisfy either UCL's minimum benchmark entrance requirements or any programme specific entrance requirements, may seek a suspension of UCL's regulations from Vice Provost (Education and Students Affairs) in his role as the Dean of Students (Academic). Application for suspension should be submitted via Admissions. Requests to suspend regulations to admit students with a third class honours degree will not normally be approved nor will requests to suspend the English language requirements.

37. In the case of graduate candidates, and subject to the approval of the Vice Provost (Education and Student Affairs), candidates who do not satisfy UCL's minimum entrance requirements or programme specific entrance requirements may be admitted subject to the satisfactory completion of either a qualifying examination or a qualifying year. Approval of the admission of a graduate candidate on the basis of a qualifying examination/year should be sought via Admissions. All qualifying examinations are set by the admitting Department. Wherever possible the assessment of a qualifying examination should include external moderation. In accordance with UCL regulations, a qualifying examination need not necessarily be restricted to a formal written examination. The structure of a qualifying year is determined by the admitting Department having regard to the candidate's academic background and subject to the approval of the Vice Provost (Education and Student Affairs). All qualifying examinations/years must be completed and assessed prior to a candidate embarking upon the relevant Master's or research programme. Candidates will not normally be permitted to retake a qualifying examination or qualifying year.

38. Any student admitted through suspension of regulations who has not met the English proficiency requirement will be required to undertake an in-session language course at the Centre for Languages and International Education. It will be the responsibility of the admitting department to pay the cost of the in-session course.

Part-time Study

39. Academic requirements for admission for part-time study are identical to those for full-time study.

Non-Resident MPhil/PhD Study

40. A department wishing to make an offer to a candidate to pursue MPhil/PhD study on a non-resident basis, i.e. outside the UK, must satisfy the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee that the institution to be used by the candidate as his/her study base is of international standing and able to provide adequate facilities for the candidate's research. The department must also show that adequate arrangements for communication between the candidate and his/her supervisor are in place and that these arrangements comply with UCL's requirements for frequency of contact between supervisor and students. Chair of the Research Degrees Committee approval of the admission of a non-resident MPhil/PhD student should be sought via Admissions. Note: in cases where an approved programme has been set-up with a specific institution or institutions outside the UK, individual applications will not need to be submitted for approval to the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee.

Complaints

41. Decisions on the admission of applicants by the authorised UCL officers are final and there is normally no appeal against such decisions.

42. UCL will consider a complaint relating to an application for admission only if there is substantive evidence of an irregularity in the procedure under which the application has been processed.

43. In the first instance any complaint concerning a graduate application should be addressed to the Director of Access and Admissions, Student and Registry Services. If the complaint is against the Director of Access and Admissions, it should be addressed to the Registrar.

44. The Director of Access and Admissions will investigate the complaint and respond formally to it. If the complaint is not resolved through this investigation, or if the complainant is not satisfied with the response, the complainant may submit the complaint to the Registrar. The complaint must be received by the Registrar within 28 days of the date of the formal response from the Director of Access and Admissions. Complaints received after that deadline will not be considered.

45. When a complaint is received, the Registrar or another officer nominated by the Registrar will decide whether there is substantive evidence sufficient to justify a formal investigation.

46. If the Registrar decides the evidence is not sufficient to justify a formal investigation, he/she will inform the complainant accordingly.

47. If the Registrar decides there are prima facie grounds for a formal investigation, the complaint will be referred to a panel comprising:

- The Vice Provost (Education and Student Affairs);
- Nominee of the Registrar;
- A person independent of UCL to be nominated by the Registrar.

48. The Registrar will inform the complainant of the decision to refer the complaint to the panel.

49. The panel will normally consider the complaint on the basis of the documentation relating to the case. The panel may interview the applicant and any other persons involved in the case, and shall be required to ensure equal treatment to the parties concerned, i.e. the applicant and the officer(s) who took the decision on the application or who were involved in the procedure for handling it. Such persons shall receive copies of all the documentation relevant to the complaint.

50. The panel will determine the complaint and decide upon any action to be taken as a result of their determination. Their decision will be conveyed to the Registrar

who will communicate it to the complainant and arrange for the implementation of any action resulting from it. The other parties to the complaint will also be informed.

51. The decision of the complaints panel is final as far as UCL's internal procedures are concerned. If a complainant is dissatisfied with the decision of the panel, he or she may have recourse to the courts to request a judicial review.

52. The Registrar will keep a record of complaints which will include details of the age, gender and ethnicity of complainants.

Fraud

53. UCL is conscious of the potential risk of applicants seeking fraudulently to gain admission and/or receive a grant, loan or bursary. The prevention of such fraud is implicit in UCL's procedures governing the following areas of work:

- Selection of candidates for admission
- Assessment of accepted candidates' fees status
- Verification of the qualifications of students admitted
- Enrolment of students
- Issuing of maintenance allowances to enrolled students and the processing of student loan applications
- Issuing of certificates of student attendance
- Monitoring of the attendance of students.

54. Where there is evidence that an applicant for admission to UCL may have provided false or misleading information on his/her application or papers associated with his/her application, the case will initially be considered by the Director of Access and Admissions who will seek to determine whether the applicant has been guilty of deliberate misrepresentation. This procedure will also be followed where evidence comes to light after an individual has become a registered student of UCL that he/she may have provided false or misleading information when making his/her application for admission to UCL.

55. The applicant will be informed in writing by the Director of Access and Admissions of the apparent misrepresentation and asked to provide a statement in explanation or mitigation. Failure to provide a statement, or to provide satisfactory evidence to corroborate his/her explanation, will result in the applicant having the application and/or offer of admission to UCL withdrawn. The decision to withdraw an offer of admission or de-register a student from UCL as a result of fraud in an application will be made in consultation with the Vice Provost (Education and Student Affairs).

56. The Director of Access and Admissions will communicate immediately in writing the decision to the applicant.

57. An applicant to UCL does not have the right of appeal against the decision.

58. If fraud is suspected, UCL will, as appropriate, liaise with relevant external bodies (including the police and the UK Border Agency).

Criminal Records Checks

59. All graduate candidates are asked to declare when accepting an offer whether they have any criminal convictions and are advised that the offer of a place is subject to a satisfactory criminal records declaration being submitted. Whenever a conviction is declared, subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, full details of the offence, conviction and sentence will be sought and an Assessment Panel (consisting of the Vice Provost (Education and Student Affairs), Deputy Registrar (Operations and Planning) and the Director of Access and Admissions) convened to consider the case

60. In the case of graduate applicants declaring a criminal conviction, the Assessment Panel will make an assessment once the applicant has replied to their offer of admission. They will conduct a risk assessment and consider actions that could practicably be taken to mitigate any identified risks without detriment to the applicant's ability to pursue their chosen programme of study. They will then either: (a) Authorise the admission of the student subject to the academic decision of the relevant admissions selector. Such authorisation may impose conditions aimed at mitigating any identified risk and those conditions, if any, must be stated in the offer letter. (b) Recommend that the student not be admitted to UCL, giving reasons.

61. All applicants must declare any criminal conviction that is received after an offer of admission is made and prior to enrolment at UCL. In such circumstances, the Assessment Panel will conduct a risk assessment and consider actions that could practicably be taken to mitigate any identified risks without detriment to the applicant's ability to pursue their chosen programme of study. They will then either: (a) Confirm the admission of the student. Such confirmation may impose conditions aimed at mitigating any identified risk. Where conditions are imposed, the Director of Access and Admissions will write to the applicant to inform them. (b) Recommend that the student not be admitted to UCL, giving reasons. In this case, the applicant's offer of admission will be withdrawn.

62. Should the Panel recommend that the student not be admitted to UCL, the student has the right of appeal to the Provost.

63. In the case of a limited number of programmes, where students may potentially come into unsupervised contact with children and/or "vulnerable adults", an enhanced disclosure certificate is sought from the Disclosure and Barring Service, the Government agency established to provide employers and others with information about any criminal convictions that an individual might possess. Queries regarding DBS checks for students should be referred to the Registrar's Office, Student and Registry Services, email: srs@ucl.ac.uk, telephone 020 3108 8207.

Affiliate Students

64. Affiliate students are students who are enrolled at another university and who wish to undertake study at UCL, either at undergraduate or graduate level, for credit towards their home university degree. This includes students who apply to UCL through Erasmus and Junior Year Abroad (JYA) links. Applications from affiliate students are processed through Admissions. Visiting research students also apply via the affiliate route.

65. Affiliate applications are made on the relevant application form available to download at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/international/affiliate>. Affiliate applicants currently do not have access to the Applicant Portal and are communicated with and notified of the decision on their application by email.

66. Applications for Erasmus and exchange places at UCL can only be considered if a signed formal agreement is in place with the applicant's home institution.

67. Affiliate applicants are required to meet the standard graduate entry requirements for UCL, see paragraphs 28 and 29 above. With the exception of students coming to study at UCL under an Erasmus agreement where English language has not been specified as a condition, all affiliate students must meet UCL's English language requirements as noted in paragraph 31 above.

68. The selection process for affiliate applications follows the same process as for undergraduate degree applications, for details please see paragraphs 9 and 10 above.