

Document Details

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Lancaster University Admissions Policy

1. Purpose and scope

- 1.1 This document summarises Lancaster University's policy on undergraduate and postgraduate admissions to full-time and part-time degree programmes. It does not address the admission of study abroad/exchange students. Student recruitment and marketing are also beyond the scope of this policy. It should be read in conjunction with the University's Terms and Conditions for Students:
<https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/admissions/terms-and-conditions-for-students/>.

2. Principles and aims

- 2.1 Lancaster University's Admissions Policy and associated recruitment and admissions procedures should be seen in the context of supporting the institution's goals and ambitions as set out in the University's Strategic Plan:
<https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/about-us/strategic-plan/>.
- 2.2 The principal aim of the Policy is to ensure admission practices are fair, explicit and implemented consistently to support equal opportunity.
- 2.3 In accordance with this Policy, Lancaster University aims to:
- offer attractive and relevant degree programmes underpinned by Lancaster's high academic reputation and institutional quality standards;
 - recruit students with academic ability and the potential to succeed;
 - attract and retain students who have the potential to succeed in their chosen programme and who will benefit from the experience;
 - offer an efficient and professional admissions service to all applicants;
 - ensure there is equality of opportunity for all applicants, whatever their background; and
 - treat all applications fairly and consistently, evaluating each application on its own merits.

3. Responsibility, monitoring and review

- 3.1 This policy is the responsibility of the Head of Admissions and Outreach and is overseen by the Education Committee of Senate and, ultimately the University's Senate itself.
- 3.2 The policy is reviewed annually to ensure that it complies fully with any changes in legislation, aspires to best practice in the sector and continues to support the vision and values of the University.

4. Admissions criteria

- 4.1 Criteria for admission including entry levels and grades are approved on an annual basis. These criteria will support the University's aims and be in accordance with the principles within this document.
- 4.2 Lancaster University welcomes applications from students studying a wide range of UK, European and international qualifications that offer effective preparation for study. The Admissions team determine the equivalence of non-UK qualifications using the advice provided by organisations such as UCAS and the National Academic Recognition and Information Centre (NARIC), as well as internal guidance based on our experience of a qualification's suitability as a preparation for study at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. Further information about both general and course specific entry requirements can be found at:
<https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/study/>.
- 4.3 In addition to academic entry requirements, the University requires all students to demonstrate they are prepared for a programme of study delivered in the English language. Information on acceptable English language qualifications can be found at: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/study/international-students/english-requirements/>.

5. Student Visas

- 5.1 The UK government operates a points based immigration system for all international (non UK) students. Applicants who are not a British citizen, or a citizen of one of the European Economic Area (EEA) countries, will need a visa to study in the UK. Further details at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration>.
- 5.2 The University is licensed with the Home Office as a Student Sponsor. The University aims to provide a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) in good time for the visa application but in doing so relies on the applicant taking responsibility for making an early application for admission including complete details of all previous study and periods of study in the UK.
- 5.3 In order to comply with the relevant United Kingdom legislation and immigration regulations, the University will notify the immigration authorities, where relevant, of any non-arrival, late arrival or refusal, of an applicant and of any subsequent changes to a student's registration status. The University reserves the right to refuse admission should an applicant be found not to be in a position to meet all UK visa requirements for the anticipated full duration of his/her programme of study.
- 5.4 The University may need to review this policy in light of changes to Home Office Student Visa policy in order to remain compliant with Sponsor duties. This may result in changes to matters such as the evidence required for English language proficiency at short notice. Where changes are necessary due to Home Office

changes the University will endeavour to contact all applicants holding an offer and on whom the change will impact. Further information for University admission is available at <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/student-and-education-services/international/visas-and-immigration/>.

6. Assessment and selection

6.1 When making admissions decisions the University considers an applicant's academic ability and potential to succeed on the chosen course. This may be evidenced by a range of factors, including:

- achieved or predicted academic qualifications and grades;
- qualifications in the use of English language;
- own statements of interest in the course and for research degrees, research proposals;
- potential to perform well as evidenced by references;
- relevant work experience or other professional experience; and
- where appropriate, an interview or a portfolio or sample of the applicants' work.

7. Applying

7.1 Undergraduate applications should be submitted via UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) <https://www.ucas.com/>. The University will observe the UCAS procedures and deadlines with regard to undergraduate applications.

7.2 Postgraduate applications for both Postgraduate Taught (PGT) and Postgraduate Research (PGR) should be submitted via our online application portal. More information is available at: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/how-to-apply-for-postgraduate-study/>.

7.3 Applicants should be aware that there is competition for places. As a result, we may close courses to new applications during the admissions cycle if we believe courses to be full. For undergraduate courses any closure to new applications will always be after the main UCAS scheme deadline of 15 October for Medicine and Surgery (A100 and A900) and 15 January for all other programmes prior to the year of entry.

7.4 For the majority of taught programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, the University does not require applicants to be interviewed as part of the admissions process. However, in some cases applicants will be invited for an interview if it is felt that this is the best method of identifying potential for study, and/or where there is a relevant legal/regulatory requirement or guideline (e.g. Social Work). Where programmes include interviews as part of their selection procedures for all candidates, we will make this explicit to applicants.

7.5 The University welcomes deferred applications for the majority of taught programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate level and will also consider requests from students to defer their application or offer of a place after an application has been submitted.

- 7.6 Applicants for research degree programmes may defer their start date only with the agreement of the relevant academic department, school or institute or equivalent. In some circumstances, deferral may not be possible, for example, where a supervisor is no longer available or where funding has been made available. It may not be possible to defer the award of funding, even if the place to study can be made available.
- 7.7 Applicants holding a deferred place must meet all academic conditions of their offer during the application cycle in which they submit their application. If an applicant applies for deferred entry and then wishes to bring their entry forward to the current academic cycle such requests should also be put in writing (by email) and a decision will depend on a range of factors, such as places still available on the given course and the University's overall capacity.
- 7.8 The University will consider re-applications from those not offered or electing not to take up a place. It will assess such applications on an individual basis and reserves the right to use information from a previous application in assessing a re-application.

8. Offers

- 8.1 Any offer of entry will be outlined in a formal offer from the University together with the University's Terms and Conditions for Students:
<https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/admissions/terms-and-conditions-for-students/> (and additionally for undergraduate applicants on UCAS Track).
- 8.2 The University may decide that it is unable to offer admission to the original course to which an applicant has applied, but is able to make an offer for an alternative course. In this situation the University will contact the applicant to confirm that the offer has been made for the alternative course and update the UCAS account (for undergraduate students) or the online application portal (for postgraduate applicants).
- 8.3 For undergraduate study the academic and non-academic conditions of offers must be met by 31 August in the year the application has been submitted.
- 8.4 If a decision is made to reject an applicant who has not met the conditions of an offer on the basis of results received which are subsequently changed due to a revised mark, the University will reconsider the decision provided the results are received by 31 August prior to entry in October.
- 8.5 For postgraduate study the deadline for meeting the academic and non-academic conditions of the offer will be confirmed to applicants individually within the offer.
- 8.6 If an applicant fulfils the conditions of their offer, or if the University exercises its discretion to accept an applicant on the basis of satisfactory academic performance, their place at the University will be confirmed.

9. Unsuccessful applications and feedback

- 9.1 The University receives a high volume of applications resulting in competition for places. Regrettably, this means that we are sometimes unable to make offers to, or accept a number of well qualified applicants.
- 9.2 If an application is unsuccessful, we will inform the applicant via UCAS or the PG application portal. The University will provide feedback, upon request, to unsuccessful applicants.
- 9.3 If an applicant is dissatisfied with the decision, they may wish to request a formal review of the decision or make a complaint. Further information is available within the Applicant appeals, complaints and feedback policy via <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/admissions/Applicant-Appeals-Complaints-and-Feedback-Policy.pdf>.

10. Fraud, plagiarism and omission

- 10.1 The University will check the application including, qualifications, personal statements, references, written work and research proposals provided as part of an application. The University can require applicants to provide verification of results if there are indications of potential fraud, plagiarism or collusion. The University will also want to ensure that candidates have provided complete information (e.g. concerning details of previous periods of study or employment) and may seek additional information to resolve any uncertainties in the application.
- 10.2 The University reserves the right to reject an application on the basis of lack of integrity in an application or supporting documents and to withdraw any offer made on the basis of an application that has been found to contain fraudulent or plagiarised information, or where it believes information may have been withheld. Any student found to have been admitted on the basis of fraudulent, plagiarised or withheld information may have their studies and student registration terminated.

11. Interaction between the University and the applicant

- 11.1 The University is committed to ensuring that any interaction with an applicant is conducted in a professional, courteous and respectful manner and it expects that any communication from an applicant is conducted in the same way.
- 11.2 Applicants should note that the University will not tolerate inappropriate behaviour or language towards its employees or members of the wider University community during the admissions process. Hostile, aggressive or otherwise inappropriate behaviour or language, whether expressed verbally or in writing, and excessive levels of contact, will be viewed seriously and may adversely affect the consideration of an application, appeal or complaint.

- 11.3 The University will normally warn an applicant that his or her behaviour or language is inappropriate and that action is being considered, but where the behaviour or language is particularly inappropriate no warning need be given before action is taken. Such action may include the withdrawal of an offer or the rejection of an application. Conduct which constitutes a criminal offence will be referred to the relevant authorities.

12. Exceptional or Mitigating Circumstances

- 12.1 The University recognises that some applicants will experience difficulties which may have a detrimental effect on their studies.
- 12.2 It is the applicant's responsibility to inform the University of any exceptional or mitigating circumstances that may lead, or have led to, academic performance that is not truly indicative of their potential.
- 12.3 Applicants who wish their exceptional or mitigating circumstances to be taken into account must complete and submit the form (<https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/admissions/Mitigating-or-exceptional-circumstances-form.docx>) at the earliest opportunity and no later than 1 July in the relevant admissions cycle. Exceptional or mitigating circumstances will not be taken into consideration after this date.

13. Age on entry

- 13.1 The University has a specify policy and procedure for the admission of students under the age of 18 years. More information is available at: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/admissions/students-under-the-age-of-18/>.

14. Applicants with a disability or long term health condition

- 14.1 The University welcomes applications from candidates with a physical or mental disability or long term health condition or specific learning disability. Such applicants will be considered against the same criteria as all other candidates.
- 14.2 Applicants are encouraged to declare this information in their application but this is not taken into account by the staff assessing their application. If an offer is progressed, information relating to an applicant's disability or long term health condition will be subsequently shared with the University's Disability Services. Any disability disclosure will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively.
- 14.3 The Disability Services team may contact applicants prior to entry in order to ensure that reasonable adjustments can be made. In the unlikely event that, despite reasonable adjustments, an applicant is unable to access his or her chosen course, the University undertakes to offer the applicant support in submitting an alternative application.

- 14.4 The University has a fitness to study procedure for registered students which will apply should issues arise with an applicant's ability to engage with their chosen course as a result of a disability or long term health condition, despite reasonable adjustments being in place. Further information is available at <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/strategic-planning--governance/publication-scheme/5-our-policies-and-procedures/Supported-Study-and-Fitness-to-Study-Policy-and-Procedures.pdf>.
- 14.5 Visits to the campus can be arranged on request and with reasonable notice. Candidates who have particular accommodation and access requirements are especially encouraged to take up this opportunity, although the option is available to all.

15. Criminal Convictions

- 15.1 Having a criminal conviction will not normally prevent an individual from applying or studying at Lancaster. For safeguarding and duty of care reasons, the University does require prospective students to disclose any unspent criminal convictions if they are applying to live in University accommodation.
- 15.2 Applicants applying to live in University accommodation are required to declare any unspent criminal convictions. Following due consideration by the University's Disclosures Group, appropriate measures will be put in place in relation to any prospective student with an unspent conviction and these will be a condition of registration. Further information is available at <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/accommodation/criminal-convictions/>.
- 15.3 For some courses related to regulated professions, spent criminal convictions must also be declared. Applicants will be required to make such a disclosure at the point of accepting an offer of admission.

16. Tuition Fee Status

- 16.1 In line with the requirements of the UK Government, applicants are assessed as eligible to pay either home (UK) tuition fees or international tuition fees. The decision is based on the information provided as part of the application and any additional information that the University has requested.
- 16.2 Tuition fee status is determined by the University in accordance with the Education (Fees and Awards) (England) Regulations 2007 and the Higher Education (Fee Limit Condition) (England) Regulations 2017. Guidance is provided by the UK Council for International Student Affairs <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/>.
- 16.3 If the University considers an applicant's fee status to be unclear from the information provided in the application, the Admissions team will contact the applicant to ask for further information.

- 16.4 Once an applicant has enrolled at the University, decisions will only be changed where it can be shown that the University's initial fee assessment (based on the evidence available at the time of the decision) was incorrect. A change in fee status post-enrolment is not guaranteed.
- 16.5 In certain cases where a student's circumstances have changed, a fee status review can be requested and a decision will be made in accordance with section 16.2. Where an applicant considers that the decision is incorrect, they should query this prior to enrolment. Further information on circumstances that allow a change in fee status after enrolment is available via <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/>.
- 16.6 Information relating to tuition fees is available at:
- Undergraduate applicants:
<https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/fees-and-funding/>
- Postgraduate applicants:
<https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/postgraduate-fees-and-funding/>

17. Data Protection and Privacy Notices

- 17.1 The University is committed to full compliance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and any complimentary national legislation.
- 17.2 The Student Privacy Notice applies to both prospective and current students at Lancaster University (full details are available via <https://lancaster.ac.uk/privacy/student-privacy/>).