The
University of
Law

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND ADMISSIONS POLICY

1   The University of Law's (the University's) Recruitment, Selection and Admissions Policy has been informed by the Office for Students Sector-Recognised Standards and the General Ongoing Conditions of Registration and has regard to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. The Office for Students Sector Recognised Standards and the General Ongoing Conditions of Registration are the definitive reference points for all UK higher education institutions and set out how academic standards are established and maintained and how the quality of learning opportunities are assured and enhanced. This policy sits within The University of Law's Quality and Standards Code, which provides a suite of policies designed to safeguard the academic standards of The University of Law and to assure the quality of learning opportunities offered; this policy should therefore be read in conjunction with other relevant policies within the code.

Introduction

2   The University recognises that central to this policy is the University's responsibility for the academic standards of all awards granted in its name and the quality of learning opportunities for students. This policy sets out the scope of the University's responsibilities for the management of arrangements for admitting applicants to its programmes of study.

3   In applying this policy, the University aims to encourage and maintain equality of opportunity for all applicants, irrespective of age, creed, disability, ethnic origin, gender, nationality, and sexual orientation.

Definitions

4   ECCTIS – Ecctis provides official UK national agency services on behalf of the UK Government in qualifications, skills, and migration.

5   UCAS – Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

6   CAB – Central Applications Board

7   Admissions - Refers to the practices and processes developed and delivered by the University that relate to admitting an applicant up to the point of enrolment on a course through an application and selection process.

8   Recruitment - A broad range of activities and initiatives undertaken by the University and its representatives prior to the point of admission. This includes outreach, events and various marketing activities, which ultimately encourage applicants to either apply to, or start a course with, the University.

9   Widening access – The University uses this term to refer to activities and initiatives designed to enable different groups of people to gain entry to higher

education. This includes the extent to which the University may (or may not) vary its admission or selection processes (known in the sector by the term 'contextual admissions') according to local or national policy guidelines and expectations.

10   Prospective applicant - Refers to all those who are considering applying for any course, at any level and employing any mode of study, with the University.

11   Applicant - Refers to all those who have applied for any course, at any level and employing any mode of study, with the University.

12   Current student - Students who are registered/enrolled on any course at undergraduate or postgraduate level, with the University. An individual becomes a 'current student' at the point of enrolment.

13   Contextual admissions - Data and information that enables the University to put attainment in the context of the circumstances in which it was obtained, for example, educational, geo-demographic and socio-economic background data.

14   Inclusive admissions - An admissions system which seeks to minimise any unnecessary barriers in the process which may prevent some groups of applicants from making a successful application.

15   Bookings – Individuals who book a course via the University's e-store are referred to as bookings as opposed to applicants because all courses on the e-store have no entry requirements or admissions process. Instead, they have a short booking process.

16   E-store – The University provides access to a small range of courses via an e-store. These courses do not have any entry requirements and tend to be shorter, non-award-bearing offerings. Once an individual has booked their place, the enrolment process mirrors that of programmes with an admissions process.

Responsibility for this policy

15   Ultimate responsibility for the development of clear and effective processes and procedures associated with the quality assurance and maintenance of standards of academic provisions and overseeing their application lies with the Academic Board of the University.

Expectation

16   The University's recruitment, selection and admissions policy and procedures adhere to the principles of fair admission. They are transparent, reliable, valid, inclusive, and underpinned by appropriate organisational structures and processes. They support the University in the selection of applicants who can successfully complete their programme.

Key Aims and Principles

17 The recruitment, selection and admission to all programmes offered by the University is governed by this policy.

18 In implementing the policy the University aims to adhere to principles of transparency, efficiency, professionalism, reliability, inclusion, and courtesy. This approach supports the University's ongoing objective to support and protect its core values of offering and maintaining academic and professional excellence.

19 The University considers all applications to study based on the applicant's ability and potential to succeed within the University's learning environment.

20 The University admits applicants to its programmes based on prior academic achievement. Professional achievement may also be recognised and is typically exemplified by managerial-level experience via established non-standard routes.

21 The entry criteria for each programme will reflect the programme and professional body requirements of that programme and will be agreed by the Academic Board and made publicly available on the University's website.

22 Where no entry criteria are specified, for example for programmes booked via the e-store, the University will still publish content advising of the types of student profile that the programme would best suit to inform decision making.

23 The University's approach to admissions is informed by the University's equality and widening participation and diversity strategies and complies with equal opportunities legislation.

24 The University ensures that all recruitment, selection and admissions processes are annually reviewed and enhanced to ensure that they:

    23.1 remain current and effective;

    23.2 accurately reflect the mission and strategic objectives of the University; and

    23.3 meet customer, professional, academic, legislative, and regulatory requirements.

25 The University undertakes robust statistical analysis to ensure that offers are consistent and fair and promote equality of opportunity for all.

26   All staff involved in the admissions and recruitment process are appropriately selected, qualified, and trained to deliver a consistent, fair, and professional service to all applicants.

Procedural Approach

Recruitment, selection and admissions processes

27   The University provides clear information on programmes available and the selection criteria through a number of different sources, these include:

> 27.1   the University's website

> 27.2   UCAS Coursefinder

> 27.3   prospectuses

> 27.4   the University's online applicant portal

> 27.5   University events

> 27.6   CAB

28   The processing of bookings via the e-store is conducted by a Programme Administration team.

29   The selection of applicants is conducted by an Admissions team, including Programme Directors and Heads, specialist Admissions staff and other senior staff.

30   All staff involved in the Admissions process are kept up-to-date with internal and external regulations, along with entry requirements and equivalent qualifications for all programmes. All procedures within the Admissions department are formally documented. Staff use ECCTIS as a benchmark for international qualification comparisons in addition to internally created benchmarking processes approved by the Admissions Committee of the Academic Board.

31   The University is committed to widening access to and participation in higher education and makes it clear to all prospective applicants how information provided during the application process will be used including any use of contextual data.

Recruitment activities to assist prospective applicants/bookings in making informed decisions

32   The University is conscious of the commitment in time and money that applicants/bookings make in choosing to join one of its programmes. It therefore ensures that applicants/bookings have access to comprehensive information about its

programmes from the first point of contact made. All published information complies with the University's Published Information Policy.

33   The University aims to ensure consistency in the information it provides to all its applicants/bookings, both domestic and international. The University encourages applicants/bookings to be able to make an informed decision about the programme and the mode which is most suitable for their needs.

34   In addition to promotional literature in appropriate formats and our website, the University's promotional activities normally include:

34.1   on-campus and virtual open days to provide applicants/bookings with information about the University's programmes;

34.2   on-campus and virtual employability workshops and awareness days to demonstrate in practice the relevance of the programmes in a professional context;

34.3   participation at schools' and other higher education providers' careers events both in the UK, internationally and virtually;

34.4   online webinars to provide prospective students/bookings with information and the opportunity to ask questions in real time; and

34.5   presence across multiple social media platforms where prospective students/bookings can engage with the University in a format most suiting their personal preferences

35   The University ensures its programmes are promoted by staff who have first-hand experience of both the academic execution of programmes and the recruitment process adopted by employers in the appropriate sector.

The admissions process – how prospective applicants know what to do

36   The University's website and applicant portal explains the application process for each programme, including;

36.1   information for prospective applicants on application and acceptance deadlines;

36.2   complaints procedures;

36.3   how and when to apply for a course of study;

36.4   what the application and selection process involves;

36.5   key milestones in the process;

36.6   expected communications between the University and applicant; and

36.7   deadlines for financial support arrangements such as scholarships, bursaries, or government loans. This also includes a link to the relevant page to apply for any University programmes.

35   Certain programmes are applied for through external online application systems, for which relevant links are provided on the website.

36   Prospective applicants who require learning support because of disability or other special needs are requested to disclose this at the point of application. The University takes its responsibility under the Equality Act seriously and only uses the information disclosed to ensure that appropriate facilities are provided to students to enable them successfully to undertake our programmes without prejudice. Further information on this can be found in the University's policies under Q4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement.

37   Offer, confirmation of acceptance and joining e-mails make clear to applicants what they are required to do to enrol on a programme. Applicants receive the terms and conditions and fee schedule information for their chosen course at the point of offer to ensure that they are fully aware of any financial terms and the circumstances under which they both become liable for or may be refunded any deposit or tuition fee amounts. The offer letter also contains core information on start date, end date, location, and mode of study.

38   A confirmation email is sent out within 48 hours of an applicant accepting a place. A joining email is sent 28 days prior to the course commencing where possible with further details including:

38.1   programme start dates;

38.2   timetable;

38.3   fee and payment information; and

38.4   any actions to complete before the programme commences.

Entry requirements

39   There are written criteria, agreed by the University's Academic Board and in compliance with programme and professional body requirements, for each programme. These are reviewed annually. All entry requirements are available on the University's website. These requirements include both academic and non-academic requirements.

40   The application process is inclusive and allows all prospective applicants to make an application and receive a fair outcome regardless of background. Admissions decisions and offers are made without reference to individual disability or other special needs and are subject only to agreeing satisfactory learning support arrangements with each applicant.

41   The University welcomes international applicants. International applicants follow the same admissions process as domestic applicants in terms of assessing their academic eligibility for a specific programme of study. ECCTIS is used as a benchmark for assessing new international qualifications. Where English language capability needs to be demonstrated, the requisite levels are clearly outlined on the website under entry requirements for each specific programme and in a published English Language policy.

42   International applicants are also subject to the University's policies under the UK Government's Student Route Visa requirements. International applicants can expect additional stages to their applicant journey that are overseen by the University's Student Immigration Compliance and Advice (SICA) department.

43   In accordance with the University regulations, applicants who will be under 18 years of age at the time of entry are required to comply with the relevant University policies.

Notifying applicants of decisions

44   An applicant initially receives an acknowledgement email from the Admissions team upon receipt of the application.

45   Thereafter, the Admissions team conveys the University's decision to the applicant. Decisions on applications are normally communicated via email to applicants within two working days of receipt of application or by the fixed timelines enforced by UCAS, the Bar Standards Board, the Solicitors Regulation Authority, and other similar professional bodies.

46   Applicants are informed if further information is required before the University can decide on their application along with the reason(s) for obtaining the further information.

47   Where the admissions decision is the offer of a place, the offer email indicates how to accept this offer through the applicable online portal.

48   Decisions for undergraduate programmes are communicated initially via UCAS. Decisions for all other programmes are communicated via email and the University's online portal.

49   All decisions of the Admissions team are recorded, with any reasons for refusal.

Offers

50   The offer email includes or refers applicants to details of:

  50.1   clear information as to what the conditional or unconditional nature of the offer has been based on

  50.2   programme fees;

  50.3   programme dates;

  50.4   terms and conditions of the offer;

  50.5   fee schedules;

  50.6   acceptance and registration deadlines;

  50.7   the process for declining an offer, transferring, deferring, or cancelling a place.

Programme changes

51   Although the University takes all steps to avoid changes to a programme between application and registration, sometimes it may be necessary to change the specification or location of a programme, or discontinue a programme. Programme changes are governed by University policies.

52   Any such changes to programmes are communicated to applicants/bookings as soon as possible by the relevant department with any actions required of the applicant/booking identified.

Registration and induction

53   Once an unconditional offer of a place has been accepted or from an e-store perspective, a booking made, prior to commencing their programme, applicants/bookings are required to complete an online enrolment form.

54   The University ensures the efficient and effective integration of applicants/bookings onto their programmes. Applicants/bookings will be provided with clear and consistent information to aid programme registration and induction. Information is available in a range of accessible formats.

Feedback, complaints, and appeals

55   The Admissions team provides email feedback to any unsuccessful applicant on receipt of a written or email request.

56   The University operates an efficient, effective, and courteous service to all applicants/bookings. In the event of a problem occurring at any stage of the recruitment, selection, or admission process then the University resolves the matter informally in a speedy and effective manner. Should an informal resolution not be possible then a complaint may be made in writing to the University Complaints Officer under the University's External Persons Complaints Policy.

57   Complaints are considered in accordance with the University's External Persons Complaints Policy. The University Complaints procedure can be used to cover the following types of complaint:

   57.1   a complaint about the University's handling of a query or an application for admission/booking for example a procedural error, irregularity, or maladministration; or

   57.2   allegations that admissions criteria were not applied correctly or even-handedly.

58   The University reserves the right to refuse entry to any of its programmes to an applicant/booking who;

   58.1   does not meet the entry requirements specified for the programme, including requirements set by professional and other external bodies;

   58.2   would contravene UKVI compliance by the University;

   58.3   during previous study with us or any part of the application/booking process displayed conduct deemed to be unacceptable in accordance with University policies;

   58.4   has unspent criminal convictions which suggest that the applicant/booking may pose a danger to the University's students, staff, or visitors.

59   In order to manage course capacities, the University may withdraw an offer once all or nearly all of the places available on a specific course are filled. Applicants will be notified if this happens and provided with information on alternative courses and start dates available.

60   The decision made by the University is final and there is no appeal against any decision concerning selection or admission. Applicants/bookings are advised to use the complaints procedure.

61   The University actively engages with students who have recently gone through the admissions or booking process. This includes the use of insight surveys carried out each intake with a view to continually improving the process for future diverse cohorts. Such procedures include engagement with declined applicants as well as those who successfully completed the application/booking process.

Deferrals

62   Applicants/bookings are permitted to defer the start of their studies within a 13-month period from the start date of their original programme of choice at the discretion of the University. Should an applicant/booking wish to defer beyond this timeframe they will be invited to make a fresh application.

Data protection

63   The University collects personal data as part of Admissions and bookings processes. This information is held in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and the University's Privacy Policy.

Responsibility for the provision

64   Responsibility for effective implementation of the Admissions Policy lies with the Director of Admissions, Access & Participation who assumes overall responsibility for the Admissions function. Responsibility for the e-store and bookings processes lie jointly with the Head of Business Operations and the Head of E-Commerce.

Monitoring and review

65   Responsibility for reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the Admissions Policy lies with the Academic Board.

Version history

Version	Amended by	Revision summary	Date
1.0	Head of Admissions	Initial draft	10.06.14
1.1	Head of Students – Bloomsbury LPC	QA Team Review	11.07.14
1.2	Head of Admissions	Revisions based on QA Team Review	17.07.14
1.3	External Consultant	External review	31.07.14
1.4	Review Group: VP (AGQS), Academic Registrar, Head of Quality Assurance	Coherence activity	06.08.14
1.5	Executive Management Board	Approval	13.08.14
1.6	Proof Reader	Proofing	29.08.14
1.7	Academic Board	Approval	19/09/14
2.0	Director of Conversion & Enrolment	Annual review	05/11/15
2.1	Academic Board	Approval	10/02/16
3.0	Reviewed by Admissions Committee	Approved	11/01/18
4.0	Reviewed by Admissions Committee	Approved	16/05/18
4.1	Updated by Director of Conversion & Enrolment and Programme & Student Lead - LPC	Initial draft updated to reflect the QAA's Advice and Guidance: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access	22/01/19
4.2		Approved by Academic Board	14/02/19
4.3	Registry Officer	Change to the document coding convention	March 2020

4.4	Director of Admissions, Access & Participation	Included e-store programmes with the policy, updated external bodies and regulatory references.	August 2022
4.5	Director of Admissions	Included new point 59 on course capacity	February 2023
4.6	Head of Awards Integrity and Standards Assurance	Paragraph 1 updated to reflect the correct external agencies.	March 2024