

Higher Education Quality and Standards

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Description:

This document outlines the Higher Education Admissions procedures applicable to all standard and non standard admissions across the Grimsby Institute Group (hereafter called 'the Institute'), including undergraduate, postgraduate, UK and international applicants from both within and outside the European Union (EU). This Code of Practice allows the Institute to assure itself and others that the procedures and practices used to attract, recruit, select and admit students are fair, transparent, systematic and consistent. In using this code of practice other documents may need to be considered:

Version 1.3 (May2013) introduces the following changes with immediate effect:

- Inclusion of reference to UK Quality Code replacing reference to Academic Infrastructure and internal changes
- Updated titles of departments, committees and staff (1.8), (2.6) (5.9).
- Amendments for greater transparency (1.12), (5.8), (5.9), 5.10), (5.12), (5.13), (5.14), (6.3), (6.4), (6.5), (6.6). (7.1), (7.2).
- Updated procedures (4.2), (5.2.).

Document Reference:

QAArwp.	Retention in Higher Education
QAAAdm.	Higher Education Admissions Appeals & Complaints
QAApl.	Accreditation of Prior Learning (Certificated and Experiential) (Higher Education)

For further advice on how the code of practice works, you should contact the Quality and Standards Department.

Department Contacts: Quality and Standards (Higher Education)
Rm: 3H06 (01472) 311222

Additional guidance can be obtained by visiting www.qaa.ac.uk and referring to QAA Code of Practice: Section 10: Admissions to higher education - September 2006

**This document is available in alternative forms
on request from the Quality and Standards Department**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Whilst the Institute welcomes applications from individuals who have the potential to succeed in higher education (HE), this Code of Practice recognises the complexity of factors involved in the admissions process and therefore focuses on:
- i. promotion and marketing of HE programmes to prospective students, parents, employers and advisers
 - ii. identification and recruitment of prospective students
 - iii. selection of applicants suitable for a particular programme
 - iv. offer of a place on a programme of study
 - v. enrolment of students onto a programme of study
 - vi. induction and orientation of new students
- 1.2 The Institute's procedures for the recruitment and admission of students have been designed to be fair, clear and explicit. An Access Agreement will be submitted to the Office of Fair Access (OFFA) as applicable following government requirements. Applications will be treated as 'standard' and 'non standard' entries. The term 'standard entry' refers to applicants who obtain, or expect to obtain the specified and traditional entry points or qualifications needed to progress onto a chosen award/ programme of study. The term 'non standard entry' refers to many applicants at the Institute who do not fulfil traditional entry criteria but can gain entry through other criteria as specified within approved programme documentation.
- 1.3 In instances only relating to the University of Hull, some applicants will be categorised as 'special cases.' These are applicants who do not have entry criteria as specified in the approved programme documentation and require the University to approve the application before a place can be offered on the chosen programme of study.
- 1.4 The Institute will ensure that the staff within the HE Admissions and Administration team are appropriately trained, supervised and updated in order to implement relevant sections of the code of practice for Higher Education Admissions. Coordination of training in admissions is the responsibility of the HE Manager for Admissions and Administration.
- 1.5 The Institute will ensure regular monitoring and review of recruitment, admissions, and enrolment processes and procedures, and takes responsibility for ensuring all those involved in admissions are competent to undertake their roles. This includes ensuring that those making admissions decisions are competently able to discriminate between applicants, to determine who should be selected.
- 1.6 Judgements exercised in the admissions process must be underpinned by transparent and justifiable criteria that is consistently implemented without undue variance. Prospective students will be offered support and guidance at all stages.
- 1.7 Any review of recruitment, admissions and enrolment processes must take into account strategic objectives, the mission of the Institute and its relationship to the admissions process to ensure policies, codes of practice and procedures are relevant.
- 1.8 The Institute's Quality and Standards Committee will review findings, themes and trends relating to recruitment, admissions and enrolment and report institutional themes to the Quality Improvement Committee.

1.9 The Institute is committed to widening participation and to promoting lifelong learning in conjunction with its Equality of Opportunity policies. It actively employs strategies within its recruitment and selection procedures to fulfil these aims. The Institute is committed to pursuing non-discriminatory systems and practices inclusive of the following:

- i. learning difficulty/disability and/or sensory/mobility impairment
- ii. gender
- iii. ethnic or cultural origin
- iv. religion
- v. age
- vi. socio-economic group
- vii. sexual orientation

1.10 This Code of Practice is informed by the following:

- i. Disability Discrimination Act (1995 2005)
- ii. Equality Act (2006)
- iii. Data Protection Act (1998)
- iv. Age Discrimination Act (2006)
- v. Freedom of Information Act (2000)
- vi. Human Rights Act (1998)
- vii. Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)
- viii. Sex Discrimination Act (1975)
- ix. Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001)
- x. Data Protection Act (1998)
- xi. Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974, 2010).

1.11 Whilst Institute admissions tutors/officers recognise the complex judgements that are made when assessing the relative potential of all applicants, admissions processes must at all times be fair and lawful.

1.12 Applications for most full time undergraduate programmes of study will be made through the Universities and College Admissions Service (UCAS). Applications for part time study, postgraduate study and teacher training programmes will be made directly to the Institute.

2. Promotional and Marketing Material

2.1 The Institute is committed to ensuring that published information and promotional material relating to potential recruits and admissions is accurate at the time of publication.

2.2 The Institute will endeavour to ensure that material is accessible and that it provides potential recruits with the necessary information to make informed decisions.

2.3 The Institute is committed to ensuring that promotional and marketing information takes into account where appropriate, factors such as:

- i. the range and content of programmes offered
- ii. the diversity of its potential recruits
- iii. modes of study
- iv. entry criteria
- v. an overview of teaching and learning methods to be deployed on a programme

- vi. assessment methods
- vii. accreditation and /or approval of professional, statutory or regulatory bodies
- viii. open days and opportunities such as summer schools
- ix. the availability of financial support
- x. welfare, guidance and support services available.

- 2.4 Where a programme offered by the Institute is validated or approved by another Institution, the Institute will in every instance ensure that the partner Institution is listed and logo used prior to release, the Institute will ensure it abides by relevant Codes of Practice, Regulations, Policies.
- 2.5 The Institute's Quality and Standards Department will undertake annual reviews of Institutional promotional and marketing information and ensure materials remain relevant, accurate and accessible.
- 2.6 The Institute's Marketing and Student Recruitment department will liaise with the Quality and Standards department who will screen and quality assure requests for new material in accordance with appropriate external and internal Codes of Practice.

3. Selection of Applicants

- 3.1 The principles applied in the assessment of applications will take into account a range of evidence to enhance the opportunity for making appropriate judgements about the potential of an applicant to succeed on a particular programme.
- 3.2 Admissions tutors will consider an applicant's skills, knowledge, motivation, enthusiasm to learn and potential to succeed on each programme.
- 3.3 In the selection of applicants, admission tutors may consider different achievements and abilities which are relevant to the programme of study and are defined as an entry requirement within the approved programme document.
- i. For example, this may include in some circumstances involvement in sporting, artistic or voluntary activities, or from employment.
- 3.4 Admissions tutors may determine an applicant's suitability by means of an interview, audition, test, academic assessment and/or consideration of prior learning by experience or qualification. To ensure consistency and fairness admissions tutors will follow a minimum standard requirement when setting entry academic assessments, tests and auditions.
- 3.5 Admissions tutors/officers must remain sensitive to the extent to which applicants have had opportunities to participate in activities, and to acknowledge that, in a culturally diverse society, there are many ways in which such characteristics might be demonstrated. Activities that may be limited by a range of factors will also be considered, such as disability and social background.
- 3.6 Non standard students will be assessed in light of the entry criteria defined within the approved programme documentation, an approach intended to support applicants from a wide range of backgrounds and qualifications. Entry requirements for non standard applicants may take into account relevant experience, interests and ability to study at the required level, and as an entry requirement, must be articulated clearly and approved within the validation document. Whilst

criteria for non standard cases may justifiably vary across programmes, within a single programme the same criteria must be applied for all non standard applicants.

3.7 Special cases are defined as those students who do not have the entry criteria as approved within the validation document (standard or non standard) and in cases of University of Hull (UoH) applications only, special cases must be approved by the relevant UoH faculty before enrolment.

3.8 For international applicants from both within and outside the European Union (EU) (see list of those exempted in point 3.9), or for applicants for whom English is not a first language, entry requirements may include a range of criteria including proficiency in English language skills, evidence of academic qualifications and other specified criteria. Whilst the Institute reserves the right to judge an applicant's suitability on an individual basis, students must evidence they possess a satisfactory command of the English language in terms of reading, writing, listening and speaking and will normally hold the following:

- i. Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR) Level B2 as defined by the UK Border Agency
- ii. GCSE/GCE "O" level English: grade C
- iii. And for Masters provision a higher education degree in which English language or literature forms a substantial part.

3.9 Applicants who speak in English as a first language and who are exempt from a minimum English language requirement as specified in 3.8 include those from:

Antigua and Barbuda
Australia
The Bahamas
Belize
Canada
Dominica
Grenada
Ireland
Jamaica
New Zealand
St Kitts and Nevis
St Lucia
St Vincent and the Grenadines
Trinidad and Tobago
United States of America

3.10 For International applications from both within and outside the European Union (EU), qualifications from any country are considered, but as general rule qualifications should be equivalent to standard UK entry requirements. For some postgraduate programmes, relevant work experience may also be required. Specific programme requirements are detailed in the prospectus and other relevant material.

3.11 For International applicants from both within and outside the European Union (EU) applications must be considered through the Institute's International Office before a place can be offered.

3.12 The Institute is committed to handling applications received for its higher education programmes in a timely and proficient manner. The procedures for Institutional handling of information relating to full and part time admissions, decisions made, reasons for decisions and

timescales appropriate to each stage (including those submitted via UCAS) are detailed in: Appendix 1 (admissions procedures flow chart)

- 3.13 The Institute will endeavour to ensure that in all circumstances applicants' details are handled with regards to confidentiality. Applicants are required to sign a declaration consenting to the processing of personal data.
- 3.14 Admissions records for unsuccessful candidates must be held for one year. Admissions records for successful applicants become part of the current student records. Disposal of records will be 3 years after a students' departure (i.e. following their graduation or withdrawal, or following any subsequent appeal, complaint or similar contact).

4. Criminal Convictions

- 4.1 Applicants are asked to disclose relevant criminal convictions that are deemed not spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. If a criminal conviction is declared, the admissions team reserves the right to request further information as part of its duty of care about the nature of the conviction prior to the Institute making an offer of admission.
- 4.2 The Learner Services department will be informed of any criminal convictions before the application is assessed for an offer of a place. The Learner Services department will undertake a risk assessment in terms of a duty of care and suitability of the applicant for the chosen programme of study.
- 4.3 As part of the conditional requirement, certain programmes necessitate applicants to undergo a check through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). Information relating to programmes that require CRB checks or more, must be identified within the Institute's prospectus and applicants must be further advised during the admissions process.
- 4.4 In instances where the Institute establishes that a student has a criminal conviction(s) following enrolment, the student may be withdrawn from their programme of study.
- 4.5 It is the applicant's responsibility to explore whether any spent or unspent criminal convictions will have a negative effect on future study or career progression.
- 4.6 Applicants should refer to the Institute's disclosure of criminal convictions policy.

5. Rights and Responsibilities

- 5.1 Admissions tutors/officers must consider all applications with expediency and timeliness.
- 5.2 Admissions officer are permitted to offer a place for standard entry applicants who meet the requirements according to the programme validation document.
- 5.3 Admissions tutors must communicate admissions decisions to admissions officers within the HE Admissions and Administration office in a timely manner.
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- 5.5 Admissions tutors/officers must report to the HE Manager for Admissions and Administration any matters that are unclear or that may need further consideration such as Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL).
- 5.6 Admissions tutors/officers must be available during the clearing period
- 5.7 In instances where a student does not achieve the results specified to gain entry onto a chosen programme at the Grimsby Institute, students can request a meeting with an admissions tutor/officer for further guidance and direction. However, the Institute, in informing an applicant that they have been unsuccessful in their application, will in every instance offer appropriate guidance and support to apply for a programme(s) that will enhance their opportunity for entry in the future.
- 5.8 Upon being offered a place it is the Institute's responsibility to inform the applicant in writing and the applicant's duty to inform the Institute of the acceptance or refusal of a place.
- 5.9 The Institute aims to provide the programmes that have been advertised in the prospectus or elsewhere. However, if there is any significant change to the programme between the time at which an offer is made and the point at which registration is complete, the Institute will inform relevant applicants promptly and advise them of the options available to them.
- 5.10 Decisions on programmes being discontinued or unlikely to recruit a viable number of students will be the responsibility of the Assistant Principal 14-19 and Higher Education
- 5.11 It is the responsibility of the HE Manager for Admissions and Administration to ensure applicants are formally notified at the earliest opportunity where programmes are discontinued. In such instances it is the Institute's responsibility to support the applicant with regard to further options and choices within its portfolio of programmes.
- 5.12 If there are substantial changes to programme location or cost, it is the Institute's responsibility to inform the applicants at the earliest opportunity.
- 5.13 The Institute will communicate with applicants in a timely manner either via the appropriate national clearing house (e.g. UCAS) or to the correspondence address provided on the application.
- 5.14 Where an applicant, having received a conditional or conditional and deferred offer, fails to meet the criteria specified by the Institute for admission within the specified timescale, the Institute shall be under no obligation to admit the student to the original or to an alternative programme. The University shall be under no further obligation to the applicant.
- 5.15 Notwithstanding the statement above, the Institute may, at its discretion
- i. offer admission to a different programme
 - ii. offer admission at a different level, or
 - iii. offer admission subject to different conditions (including a deferred offer) which, if accepted, shall be subject to the conditions specified in the new offer.
- 5.16 The International office and HE Admissions and Administration Office will liaise appropriately in the best interest of international applicants from both within and outside the European Union (EU) to ensure applications are dealt with rigour, probity, fairness and expediency.

6. Offer of a Place on a Programme

- 6.1 The Institute reserves the right to refuse entry to applicants who do not meet the relevant entry criteria and if the admissions tutor/officer is not satisfied that s/he is academically able for the programme of study. Further refusal of entry or mandatory withdrawal if enrolled, may also occur if an applicant provides false information.
- 6.2 Upon offering a place on a programme of study the Institute must explain to applicants accepting offers the arrangements for enrolment, registration, induction and orientation and ensure that these arrangements promote efficient and effective integration of entrants fully as students.
- 6.3 Applicants may be required to present their original certificates for inspection and the right is reserved to verify directly with the awarding institutions.
- 6.4 It is the duty of applicants to inform the University promptly of any change of address, any change of name, or any other change in circumstances which may affect their application.
- 6.5 Applicants who have disclosed a disability are advised to contact the Institute's Disability and Learning Support Service before accepting any offer of a place in order to establish what support is available and to provide any information the Institute needs to ensure that the agreed support can be arranged.
- 6.6 The Institute cannot accept responsibility for any delay of correspondence by postal authorities in the United Kingdom or abroad, for the misdirection or non-arrival of correspondence when the correct address has not been provided, if the correspondence is forwarded to a mail sorting office or returned because the applicant or his or her agents were not at the address to receive the postal delivery, or for any consequences which have arisen as a result of the above

7. Data Protection

- 7.1 Information concerning applicants remains confidential to those processing the application. Data will not be released to any third party without the express agreement of the applicant, except in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. .
- 7.2 Where a reference may be requested by the Institute, the referee will be informed that the applicant is entitled to read any reference that may be supplied.

8. Enrolment of Students

- 8.1 Upon enrolment, students will be asked about their nationalities, ethnic origin, disabilities and any additional support needs. This information will be used for the purposes of providing support, for monitoring/review purposes, and as a reference when considering necessary modifications to curriculum, timetables, buildings, materials and equipment. Applicants and students do not have to comply with such requests.
- 8.2 All students are advised to inform the Institute of any additional or learning support needs that may be required. The Institute will make every reasonable effort to ensure that students are advised of the support available to them.

- 8.3 Applicants and students are advised to visit the locations where their studies are going to take place in order to assess the suitability of accommodation and the surroundings. Any concerns should be raised immediately with the admissions tutor/ officer and/or programme leader.
- 8.4 All students are required to undertake an assessment and advanced screening process to identify any learning or study support needs. The Institute will take all reasonable steps to meet both the general need for access and the specific needs of individuals with additional support needs.
- 8.5 Students with additional support needs will be given the opportunity to discuss ways of providing solutions to problems of access and other issues which present a barrier to learning.
- 8.6 For some programmes, such as those within 'health', there may be a requirement to undergo a medical health check to assess suitability to professional practice. Applicants will be advised during the admissions and enrolment process.
- 8.7 At the point of enrolment students are required to sign a declaration confirming their understanding that all outstanding fees must be paid in the event of withdrawal or transfer from any programme.

9. Induction and Orientation

- 9.1 Formal induction events will be arranged for new students at the Institute upon commencing as a new entrant to a programme of study. The Institute will encourage all UK and international students to attend induction; a means through which the Institute can encourage inclusion and orientation to the Institute and its immediate and wider services.
- 9.2 Induction activities will take into account a range of accessible times to encourage access for all students including full and part time students and others.
- 9.3 The Institute will ensure that during the admissions process and in particular during induction (if not before) that students who may have particular needs for learning support are identified at an early stage so appropriate intervention can be provided
- 9.4 During induction the Institute will ensure that students are given information relating to:
 - i. programme timetables and information
 - ii. the teaching/ academic team
 - iii. study skills
 - iv. tutorial and personal development planning
 - v. relevant support staff such as the Chaplaincy, study support, learner advisors, visual impaired centre, counselling services, the quality and standards department, the campus and other social activities

10. Complaints

- 10.1 An applicant (not enrolled) who wishes to lodge a complaint should do so using the CoP QAAAdm Higher Education Admissions Appeals and Complaints.
- 10.2 Enrolled students wishing to lodge a complaint should do so using CoP QACom Concerns and Complaints by Students (Higher Education)

Appendix 1: Full & Part time Admissions Procedure

