

Admissions Policy for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Programmes

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Purpose and Scope

1. This Policy is intended to give guidance to applicants and staff on the Northeastern University London's ('the University') procedures for admitting students to its programmes, for both undergraduate and postgraduate taught students.

Introduction

2. Northeastern University London is committed to admitting students of the highest calibre, with the merit and potential to thrive in our demanding academic environment, regardless of age, disability, race, nationality, gender, religion, sexual orientation, marital status or parental status.
3. The University considers applications individually, personally and on merit. The University has a strong commitment to maintaining open accessibility to higher education. The Northeastern University London bursary fund and the associated Trust ensure that finance should not be a barrier to any home-fees student of high ability who wants to apply to the University.
4. This policy is consistent with good admissions practice in higher education, as defined by: The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education UK Quality Code Theme: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access. It also complies with the following current legislation affecting the admissions of students:
 - 4.1. [The Data Protection Act 2018](#)
 - 4.2. [Equality Act 2010](#)
 - 4.3. [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)
 - 4.4. [The Human Rights Act 1998](#)
 - 4.5. [Race Relations Act 1976](#)
 - 4.6. [Race Relations \(Amendment\) Act 2000](#)
 - 4.7. [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)
 - 4.8. [Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001](#)
5. This Policy is monitored by the Director of Admissions and Analytics and is reviewed and updated as appropriate by the University in the light of experience, research and good practice.

Admissions Criteria

6. Academic Board is responsible for agreeing the entry requirements and the selection criteria for all programmes. Subject Admissions Tutors are responsible for moderating selection decisions in their subjects.
7. Subject Admissions Tutors, interviewers and admissions staff all receive training appropriate to their roles. This covers the legal framework of admissions, the Admissions Policy, and guidance on dealing with applications.

Entry Criteria

8. The University publishes information about its programmes and entry criteria in its printed and online prospectuses.
9. The University accepts a wide range of academic and English language requirements from UK and international applicants.
10. Whilst the University does not accept A-levels in Critical Thinking, Thinking Skills, General Studies and Global Perspectives for entry, the grade achieved may be taken into account when considering whether or not to accept an applicant who has just fallen short of the conditions of their offer.
11. The University recognises the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) as evidence of development of independent study and research skills, the grade achieved may be taken into account when considering whether or not to accept an applicant who has just fallen short of the conditions of their offer.
12. An A-level in an applicant's native language (other than English), designed for new learners, will not be accepted for entry.
13. The University welcomes applicants presenting other UK qualifications such as the Access to Higher Education Diploma, BTEC Level 3 qualifications and Scottish and Advanced Highers. Full details of these requirements may be found in the entry requirements section, on the website, or by contacting [The Admissions Team](#).
14. The University welcomes applicants presenting qualifications from outside the UK. Equivalencies are regularly reviewed by the Admissions Team, referring to advice from [UK ENIC](#) and the [UCAS Qualification Information Profile](#) pages. Details of these requirements may be found on the entry requirements section, on the website, or by contacting [The Admissions Team](#).
15. All students must satisfy the requirements for English proficiency prior to enrolment.

Application Procedure

16. Applications to full time undergraduate degree programmes are submitted through the Universities & Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), Common App, and the University's direct application form.
17. Applications made via UCAS are bound by the rules, regulations and deadlines published by UCAS. Applicants who submit their application via Common App or the University direct application form will be required to consent to their data being shared with UCAS as part of the University's contract with UCAS.
18. Applications to full-time and part-time postgraduate taught degree programmes are submitted through the University's direct application form.
19. Under the Data Protection Act 2018, the University will only communicate with the applicant directly unless consent is given in writing to speak to a nominated contact.

Agents

20. The University carefully selects agents through a rigorous set of checks to ensure that they comply with all relevant legislation and provide a good service to students. Agents are monitored on an annual basis.
21. Admissions colleagues cannot discuss the details of any applications with an agent without the permission of the applicant. Where an applicant would like to give permission for the University to liaise directly with the designated agent, this must be indicated on the application or communicated to the University in writing.

Contextual Admissions

22. 'Contextual admissions' is the term used to describe the use of further information, such as socio-economic background and school performance, when assessing undergraduate applicants and making offers. Contextual admissions relate to schemes that recognise that students from defined educational/social backgrounds should have that background considered in the offer grade(s) required for admission.
23. The University's contextual offer scheme ensures that it targets the relevant students by reviewing all available information contained within the applicant's application. Below are the factors which are considered within the University's contextual admission scheme:

23.1. Geodemographic information:

23.1.1. POLAR (Participation of Local Areas), based on the proportion of the young population that participates in higher education;

23.1.2. Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) which analyses a postcode and takes into consideration income, employment, health deprivation and disability, education, skills and training, barriers to housing and services, crime and living environment;

23.1.3. ACORN is a postcode-based tool that categorises the UK's population by level of socio-economic advantage.

23.2. Schooling: If the applicant has attended a state school, a school with a higher than average percentage of students on Free School Meals (FSM) or a low-performing school; this can include both GCSE and A-level performance;

23.3. Care experienced: If the applicant has spent time living with foster carers under local authority care, in residential care (e.g. a children's home), looked after at home under a supervision order, or in kinship care with relatives or friends, either officially (e.g. a special guardianship order) or informally without local authority support;

23.4. Estrangement: If an applicant is under the age of 25 and is estranged from their parents/guardians and is thus independent;

23.5. An applicant who is/was in receipt of Free Schools Meals (FSM) and/or Pupil Premium during their secondary school studies;

23.6. A forced migrant: An Applicant who is classed as a refugee, asylum seeker or who has been granted a temporary form of leave as the result of an asylum or human rights application;

23.7. Young adult carer: If an applicant is under the age of 20 and their life is adversely affected by caring for a family member who has a chronic illness, disability, mental health condition or addiction.

24. If an applicant is found to be eligible for the University's contextual offer scheme, they may be eligible for one of the following contextual offers:

- 24.1. One grade below standard entry requirement of ABB (or equivalent) to applicants who meet one of the criteria outlined above – equating to an offer of BBB;
 - 24.2. To be eligible for a contextual offer based on geodemographic information (23.1) applicants must also attend a UK state school.
25. The University may require third party evidence to verify an applicant's eligibility for contextual admissions.

Selection Process

26. The University will consider applications on a case-by-case basis. It will consider past and predicted academic achievements, as well as evidence of an applicant's ability, skills, interests, motivation and potential.
27. Admissions staff review applications on the basis of eligibility, qualifications, reference(s), personal statement, and other relevant information.
28. If an application is rejected on the basis of eligibility, the applicant will be informed via email, providing they have supplied a valid email address.
29. If admissions staff are unable to make a decision based on the information available, further information will be sought and work samples may be requested.
30. When considering the personal statement, admissions staff look for information indicating that the applicant is suitably motivated to complete their chosen programme of study, and whether the provision will challenge and benefit the student. Such information can include demonstrated interest and commitment to the subject, volunteering and other extra-curricular activities, showing what has been gained in terms of experience and skills from these interests, knowledge about the programme applied for and about the University.
31. Where the applicant has non-standard qualifications, or where the applicant narrowly misses the qualifications for the standard offer for the programme, the application is referred to the Subject Admissions Tutor.
32. When assessing the potential and merit of applicants, the admissions staff may also take into account the context of their academic achievements. Factors which may have affected performance include family circumstances, socio-economic background, illness and/or death in the family, interrupted schooling, part-time employment due to financial hardship, being in local authority care, having refugee or traveller status, having home responsibilities.

33. An academic reference will be taken up for each applicant who the University wishes to consider further. If an applicant has been out of education for over two years, then a professional reference will be taken instead.
34. References from friends, family and relatives are not acceptable.
35. Undergraduate and taught postgraduate applicants who do not meet the typical entry requirements may be invited for an interview. The purpose and format of the interview is communicated to applicants clearly in advance so that applicants have sufficient time to prepare.
36. On occasion, an undergraduate applicant may be asked to attend a second interview in order to aid the assessment of their potential and merit.
37. Interviews are recorded for quality assurance purposes. Interviews will be conducted via video conference (Zoom). A standard format note of the interview is also taken.
38. After interview, the Faculty will make a decision whether to make an offer to the applicant. The decision will be based on the applicant's academic or professional reference, personal statement, submitted work sample (if relevant), context of academic achievements, and performance at interview where applicable.

Responsibility of Applicants in the Application Process

39. It is the responsibility of applicants to provide full and accurate information in an application and to notify the University of any changes or corrections to the original application.
40. By accepting an offer of admission, the applicant agrees to abide by the rules and regulations of the University.
41. The University reserves the right to exclude a candidate who is considered on justifiable grounds to be unsuitable for a place on a particular programme according to individual circumstances.

University Offers

42. The University reserves the right to make independent decisions about its applicants. Decisions about applications will be communicated directly to the applicant.

43. An offer may be conditional or unconditional. A conditional offer will normally be made at the published typical offer requirement, or the published contextual offer level if relevant.
44. Applicants who are holding conditional offers will be informed of the procedure for submitting evidence that they have met their offer conditions, in the form of qualification documents or other evidence. For undergraduate applicants taking A level and other qualifications, where verified results are supplied directly to the university by UCAS, no further evidence will be required.
45. An offer made will be specific to a course, entry point and year of study. Any request to change course or year of entry will need to be submitted in writing to the Admissions Team for consideration.
46. An offer of a place is based on the information provided by the applicant up to the point at which the offer is made and is made in good faith by the University.
47. In the light of additional information, false statements or omissions of relevant information not available at the time of selection, an offer may be amended or, in exceptional circumstances, withdrawn.
48. The University reserves the right to correct errors where they have been made in the communication of decisions and offers. However, an offer made in error where all conditions have been satisfied will only be withdrawn with the applicant's consent.
49. In July and August each year, the University must receive examination results from applicants who have accepted conditional offers. Applicants who achieve the grades required by their conditional offers have their places confirmed.
50. Applicants who have not met the required grades as stipulated in their conditional offers have their applications reviewed and their places may be confirmed if space is available, although no guarantee is made that this will be possible.
51. To be granted deferred entry, applicants must meet all academic requirements in the year of application. Deferral entry offers for taught postgraduate programmes may include English language conditions.
52. The University will consider deferral requests on a case-by-case basis and there is no guarantee that your request will be approved. Please note that the University does not accept deferral requests from Clearing applicants.
53. Deferral requests are considered for the following academic year only. If you cannot attend in the year you have deferred to, you will need to re-apply for your desired year of entry.

54. At enrolment, applicants whose qualification certificates are not in English will have to provide the University with an English version which has been officially translated by a certified translator or translation service. The translator will need to include their signature, stamp, and date on the translation document. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that any qualification documents requiring translation are translated well before the programme start date.

Age Requirement

55. The University requires applicants to be at least 18 years old by 31 December in their year of entry.
56. The University welcomes applications from mature students (aged 21 or over) and does not set an upper age limit. The University will look for evidence of a student's ability to study at the required level, along with a combination of life experience and enthusiasm for the subject(s) applied for.

Applicants with Disabilities

57. Applicants who have a disability, a long-term health condition, mental health condition or a specific learning difficulty are advised to inform the University of this on their application form, so that any special requirements for interview (if applicable) can be arranged.
58. If an offer is made to an applicant with a disclosed disability, long-term health condition, mental health condition or specific learning difficulty, an assessment of needs will be carried out to enable the University to make all reasonable adjustments to ensure the applicant can access their chosen programme.
59. In the unlikely event that the University is unable to provide the support the applicant needs, or if there are concerns about health and safety or fitness to study, the University will continue to explore all options available to ensure equity to all applicants.

Applicants with Criminal Records

60. Offer holders will be asked to disclose any relevant unspent criminal convictions when accepting their offer and again prior to enrolment at the University.

61. Disclosure of criminal convictions is required in accordance with the University's [Declaration of Criminal Convictions Risk Assessment Policy and Procedure for Students and Offer Holders](#), and applicants with criminal records may be subject to some restrictions of activity to be decided on a case-by-case basis.
62. In the event of the Criminal Conviction box being ticked, admissions staff will contact the Head of Quality Assurance, and the procedure will be followed.

Applicants Requiring a Visa to Study in the UK

63. In the case of students who require a visa to study in the UK, the University will require a deposit (as indicated in the [Undergraduate International Fees List](#) and the [Postgraduate International Fees List](#)) in order to issue the Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies. In the event that an applicant believes they will require a visa to study in the UK, they should contact the University's [Visa Team](#) as soon as possible.
64. Northeastern University visa staff check students' documents to ensure that they meet the academic, maintenance and other requirements set out in the Immigration Rules and by the University. A Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) is only assigned once a student has demonstrated that their documents fully meet the requirements.
65. Students must demonstrate that they not only meet the entry requirements and hold an offer for the programme of study, but that they also meet the requirements for Student Route Visa sponsorship. The University reserves the right to refuse a request for sponsorship, cancel a CAS or withdraw sponsorship at its discretion.
66. Detailed information can be found in the [Student Route Visa and International Admissions Policy](#).

Fee Status

67. Fee status assessments are made by the Admissions Team based on the information provided in the application. All assessments are made in line with guidance from the UK Council of International Student Affairs (UKCISA).
68. If a student feels that the fee status assessment on their offer letter is incorrect, they should contact the Admissions Team, who will send them a Fee Status Questionnaire to complete prior to enrolment.

69. It is important to resolve any queries about fee assessment prior to enrolment, as fee status will not usually change during the programme. By accepting an offer, a student is accepting the University's assessment of their fee status.
70. Please refer to [Fee Status](#) for further details.

Plagiarism and Fraudulent Applications

71. The University is not prepared to admit applicants on the strength of information believed to be either fraudulent or plagiarised and reserves the right to reject or cancel an application under these circumstances.
72. UCAS regularly notifies the University of applicants who have submitted applications with personal statements with a high percentage of similarity as picked up by the screening software they use. For further information please refer to [UCAS Fraud and Similarity](#). Admissions staff will review the personal statement and will decide whether to request that a new personal statement is submitted depending on the percentage of similarity detected.
73. The University also uses a similarity detection service for postgraduate taught applications. If it is discovered that an applicant has provided a plagiarised personal statement or provided false or misleading information and documents, no further assessment of the application will take place until an investigation has taken place.
74. If it is discovered that a student has presented fraudulent documents or provided misleading information at enrolment, the University has the right to withdraw the student from the course.
75. The University also screens applications for AI generated content in the personal statement. If it is discovered that an applicant has provided an AI generated personal statement, no further assessment of the application will take place until an investigation has been conducted.
76. Please refer to the [Fraudulent Application Policy and Procedure](#) for further details.

Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer

77. The University accepts applications for credit transfer or recognition of prior learning. Credits may be given for prior learning where the level, standard, content, relevance and currency of that learning are appropriate to a particular programme of study.

78. The University's approach for the award of RPL is based on the achievement of equivalent, not identical, learning outcomes. This means that the learning achieved should be equivalent in terms of the level, breadth, depth, volume and currency.
79. For further information, please see [Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy and Procedure](#).

Feedback, Complaints and Appeals

80. An applicant whose application to the University has not been successful may request feedback. Feedback will be provided in writing directly to the applicant. Full details of the procedure can be found in the [Admissions Feedback, Complaints & Appeals Procedure](#).
81. An applicant who is dissatisfied about the way in which the University's admissions policies and procedures have been used to reach a selection decision, or the means by which a decision has been reached, or the actions or lack of actions by the University, may make a complaint. The procedure for making a complaint is contained in the University's [Admissions Feedback, Complaints & Appeals Procedure](#).

Version History

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Admissions Policy for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Programmes

External Reference Point(s)	The Data Protection Act 2018 ; Equality Act 2010 ; Freedom of Information Act 2000 ; The Human Rights Act 1998 ; Race Relations Act 1976 ; Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 ; Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 ; Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 ; UCAS QIPS ; UK Quality Code: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access .
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