

UCEN Manchester Admissions Policy

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UCEN Manchester Admissions Policy

Table of Contents

1. Purpose	2
2. Scope.....	2
3. Roles and responsibilities	3
4. Entry Criteria	3
5. Promotion + Marketing of Courses.....	4
6. IAG & Future U Support Service	4
7. Processing of Applicants.....	6
8. Communicating an Offer	7
9. Data Protection	8
10. Monitoring Impact	8
11. Other	8

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the 'Principles for fair Admission' are adopted and that these principles are applied consistently. This is to ensure that all prospective students are considered, on a consistent basis and are able to access information advice and guidance as appropriate.

UCEN Manchester encourages applications from all prospective students, celebrating diversity and ensuring equal access to higher education. UCEN Manchester follows relevant equality and diversity legislation and provides a fair and transparent admissions process.

The principles for fair admissions:

- **Transparency:** Clearly communicate admissions criteria, processes, and timelines to applicants, ensuring they are well-informed about the selection process.
- **Consistency and Accountability:** Evaluate applicants based on academic achievements, previous work experiences, previous career experience, and potential. Apply uniform standards to all applicants, regularly reviewing policies to ensure fairness.
- **Confidentiality:** Protect applicant data and ensure admissions decisions are made impartially, without external influence.
- **Commitment to Continuous Improvement:** Regularly update and improve admissions practices based on feedback and applicant experience.

The policy aligns with UCEN Manchester's overarching strategy for 2024/2029 and is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with best practices and relevant legislation.

UCEN Manchester is aligned to UCAS policies and procedures as well as admissions good practices.

[Admissions Good Practice | Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Conservatoires, Teacher Training | UCAS UCAS Undergraduate declaration | Undergraduate | UCAS UCAS' policies | Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Conservatoires, Teacher Training, 16-18 Choices | UCAS](#)

UCEN Manchester follows the guidelines within the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) [Undergraduate students: your rights under consumer law \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) and acknowledges the Equal Opportunities Risk Register [EORR 12 Risks.docx](#) throughout the admissions process.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Staff within UCEN Manchester and any member of staff who is responsible for and/or involved in the admissions processes at UCEN Manchester.

This will include but is not limited to:

UCEN Manchester Senior Management team

UCEN Manchester's Student Experience and Engagement Directorate

UCEN Manchester's Faculties and Schools, including Programme Leaders, and Admissions Tutors

Academic Services Department

Higher Technical & Creative Industries Curriculum Team

UCEN Manchester Applicants applying to full undergraduate degrees (HNC, HND, FDA, FdSc, BA (Hons), BSc (Hons) full level 6 top-up courses, and MA programmes.

Please note this policy does not cover admissions for Access courses or short courses.

Generally, within this policy, the term 'colleague' applies to all employees of the group. There may be occasions when there is reference to other stakeholders such as governors, contractors, agency employees, supplier and students. Where this is the case in this document, it will be clearly identified.

3. Roles and responsibilities

All UCEN Manchester managers have a responsibility to:

- a. Ensure that all colleagues are made aware of the admissions policy and associated policies and or procedures.
- b. Actively support and contribute to the implementation of this policy.
- c. Manage the implementation and review of this policy.
- d. Attend the application review meetings where relevant and directed.

UCEN Manchester colleagues have a responsibility to:

- a. Understand this policy and seek clarification from management where required.
- b. Consider this policy while completing work-related duties and at any time while representing UCEN Manchester
- c. Support fellow colleagues in their awareness of this policy.
- d. Admissions tutors are responsible for completing the Admissions Process documents and the implementation of the curriculum portion of the admissions process. This can include but is not limited to auditions, in-person and phone interviews, portfolio reviews etc.
- e. Any changes to this policy and procedure will be approved by UCEN Manchester's Academic Board. The Director of Student Experience and Engagement is responsible for the management of this policy and procedure but may delegate implementation to others.
- f. The administration of this policy and procedure within UCEN Manchester is the responsibility of the following: The Recruitment, Outreach and Admissions team, Marketing team, Academic teams, Curriculum teams and any other areas of the Institution that may deal with enquiries and admissions to a UCEN Manchester programme. Colleagues from Recruitment, Outreach, Admissions, Marketing, Academic, and Curriculum teams are responsible for handling enquiries and processing applications.
- g. Both students and colleagues are consulted during the design of this policy, ensuring their input is considered in its development and implementation.

4. Entry Criteria

- UCEN Manchester sets standard entry requirements for each course, subject to the regulations of the awarding bodies. Entry requirements are reviewed annually by the UCEN Manchester Directorate and Curriculum Management Panel in conjunction with academic teams. Any changes to entry requirements or course titles need to be approved by the Curriculum Management Panel.
- UCEN Manchester accepts a range of qualifications, including vocational and Access to Higher Education, alongside internationally recognized qualifications where relevant.
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) are acknowledged for applicants with prior qualifications or experiences. This is completed by Admissions Tutors, Curriculum Teams, Academic Services Team and sit with the academic services team.

- **Deferred Entry:** Applicants wishing to defer their offer can do so by requesting a deferral on their application or submitting a written request to the Admissions department. However, approval is not guaranteed and is at the discretion of UCEN Manchester.
- **Selection Framework:** Admissions colleagues and academic teams assess applications based on academic judgement. Some courses may require additional steps like auditions, interviews, or portfolio submissions as part of the selection process.

5. Promotion + Marketing of Courses

- UCEN Manchester recruits with integrity, providing impartial information and advice to enable prospective students to make informed choices based on previous experiences, qualifications, and career goals.
- UCEN Manchester courses are electronically promoted on the UCEN Manchester website with Data Services overview, the UCAS Website with Recruitment, Outreach, & Admissions Manager Overview, and Collateral promotion with Marketing overview. Courses are also promoted through CYF, UCAS, and Careers Stands with all collateral and design creation through Marketing with Vice Dean approval.
- The marketing and admissions colleagues work to promote UCEN Manchester as an inclusive environment that values diversity and encourages applications from all backgrounds.

6. IAG & Future U Support Service

- **Information, Advice, and Guidance (IAG)** along with Future U (FU) support service is integral in helping applicants understand their options and progression routes.
- **Disability Support:** UCEN Manchester requires applicants to disclose any disability or learning difficulty that may need support during their studies. The institution ensures that appropriate accommodations are made to provide equal access. Applicants are expected to disclose information about any Disability or student difficulty that would help to identify and provide the appropriate levels of support. Applications are reviewed regularly between the Admissions Officer and Disability Officer. If the Disability Officer believes UCEN Manchester is unable to meet need, the application will be escalated to the Director of Student Experience and Engagement, Director of Faculty and Vice Dean for a collective decision to be made.
- **Finance Support:** Guidance is provided to applicants on student finance options, including loans, bursaries, and financial aid, ensuring that students are aware of the resources available to them.

Criminal Conviction Disclosure Risk Assessment (CCDRA):

- UCEN Manchester is committed to the fair treatment of all students and welcomes applications from a wide range of individuals including those with criminal convictions. Having a criminal conviction, pending sentencing or bail conditions will not necessarily prevent someone from studying at UCEN Manchester. However, we do have a duty of care to all students, colleagues and the wider community to act reasonably to protect their health, safety and welfare.
- For applicants who have Criminal Convictions, UCEN Manchester will not ask them to declare any relevant unspent criminal convictions until they receive an offer they wish to accept. However, we do encourage early voluntary disclosure to allow an early risk assessment to take place.
- Relevant criminal convictions include convictions, orders, and other community sentences or disposals involving one or more of those convictions listed below:

- Offences concerned with violent or threatening behaviour or the causing of physical or mental harm to others, whether or not such harm was intended or actually caused
 - Sexual offences, including those listed in the Sexual Offences Act 2003
 - Unlawful supply of controlled drugs or substances, including trafficking offences
 - Offences involving firearms
 - Arson
 - Offences involving terrorism
- A criminal conviction can become 'spent' after a period of time. The length of time it takes to become spent is defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and depends on the sentence or disposal made by the court following the conviction. Until that period has passed, the conviction is considered 'unspent'. Further information can be found at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/299916/rehabilitation-of-offenders-guidance.pdf
- Spent convictions are not considered to be relevant and an applicant or student is not required to reveal them unless that applicant/student is intending to enrol onto a Childcare or Health and Social Care course or any course where a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is required. Advice regarding whether a conviction is spent and should be declared can be obtained from the appropriate agency e.g. youth Offending Team/ Probation service or by visiting the online calculator www.disclosurecalculator.org.uk or contact www.unlock.org.uk for advice.

Procedure for responding to Criminal Conviction Declarations

- Applicants who accept an offer of a place are required to disclose to UCEN Manchester, any relevant, unspent criminal convictions. Applicants are advised of this requirement within the standard offer letter issued by the Admissions Team.
- The Admissions Team has established a secure TEAMS Channel which is shared with the Head of Student Support, Advice and Wellbeing who contacts the applicant to arrange an appointment. During the appointment, the Criminal Conviction Disclosure Risk Assessment (CCDRA) Form is completed with the applicant together with any appropriate external agencies.
- Completed forms are reviewed to determine that the disclosed convictions are both relevant and not spent (as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974). Any disclosed convictions that fail to meet these criteria are excluded from further consideration and disposed of accordingly.
- For those convictions that are determined to be both relevant and unspent:
 - i) further information may be sought from a Probation Officer or other agency;
 - ii) the information disclosed will be considered by the UCEN Manchester the Head of Student Support, Advice and Wellbeing and relevant Head of Department to assess the level of risk to the UCEN Manchester community. Based on risk and our ability to put in supporting conditions, we will decide upon the applicant's admission to UCEN Manchester. Applicants will be sent an Outcome Letter.
 - iii) Documentation will be saved securely on the safeguarding platform CPOMS which only appropriate colleagues can access.
- Throughout the process, applicants are strongly advised to make their own checks as to whether a previous conviction (whether or not deemed to be spent) may have an effect on future study or professional career progression, for example, the ability to join a professional body and be aware of the impact on DBS https://www.tmc.ac.uk/media/filer_public/18/db/18db6972-7ef7-4ce4-82c2-

Communication with Applicants

- UCEN Manchester will ensure that information supplied to applicants is clear, accurate, reliable, valid and relevant.
- Communication of changes to any programmes involving significant restructuring or discontinuation will be communicated to applicants affected by such changes at the earliest possible opportunity.

Complaints

- Applicants who experience a problem with any service provided by UCEN Manchester should initially raise the matter with the person responsible for the service. If informal discussion does not resolve the situation satisfactorily, then applicants should use the Compliments and Complaints Policy [complaints and compliments policy 24 - 25.pdf \(ucenmanchester.ac.uk\)](#)
- Applicants may not raise concerns about academic judgement.
- **Careers and Welfare:** UCEN Manchester provides ongoing career advice and welfare support to help students navigate their academic and professional journeys, including job search assistance and personal well-being support.
- **Immigration/Residency:** Guidance on immigration and residency requirements, particularly following Brexit, is provided through the Future U team. UCEN Manchester no longer admits international students requiring a Tier 4 visa due to legacy sponsor status, only UK Citizens and indefinite leave to remain holders. Guidance is provided for EU/EEA students with pre-settled or settled status.

7. Processing of Applicants

- UCEN Manchester follows the appropriate procedures for admitting Full-time, Part-time, and International students.
- **Full Time Undergraduates:** Those who are applying for admission to a Full-time Undergraduate programme will normally do so through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). Within UCEN Manchester the process for admitting students through UCAS systems is centralised to the Admissions team.
- **Part Time Undergraduates:** To apply to Part-time Undergraduate programme an applicant does so through the internal UCEN Manchester programme application systems. Following this, the application is processed in the same manner as Full- Time Undergraduate programmes.
- **RPA Applicants:** To apply as an RPA applicant the applicant applies using a direct application form, which is processed manually by the admissions and curriculum team.
- **International admissions:** As stated previously, UCEN Manchester are no longer able to enrol international students, who require a Tier 4 visa to study, due to our current home office status: 'Legacy sponsor.' Legacy sponsors cannot sponsor any new Tier 4 students. All queries regarding international students are dealt with by the Admissions Team in the first instance. Any additional or further guidance regarding applicant's residency status will be directed to the Future U team. Furthermore, following the UK exit from the European Union, all students from the EU/EEA are required to have EU pre-settled or settled status. Any newly arrived students from the EU may be classed as international.
- **Admission Process:** UCEN Manchester colleagues follow the Admissions Process to ensure a consistent and professional recruitment and admissions for all applicants. The process highlights the correct method of

admitting the full-time, part-time and international students, as well as those with criminal conviction and declared disabilities.

- UCEN Manchester accepts a broad range of qualifications and combination of qualifications for entry onto its programmes, including vocational and Access to Higher Education, alongside a range of qualifications offered internationally. Qualifications may be subject to a UK ENIC (European Network of Information Centres) check, the designated United Kingdom national agency for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills.
- All applications received by the relevant UCAS equal consideration deadline (end of January prior to year of entry) are to be given equal consideration. Such consideration will also be given to applications received after the UCAS January deadline, up to and including the end of June UCAS deadline (end of main applications scheme through UCAS).
- Applicants are to disclose information about any Disability or student difficulty that would help to identify and provide the appropriate levels of support. Please see Disability Support under section 6.
- Academic judgement will be applied to determine the standard entry requirements for each course and whether there are any variations to these. Admissions colleagues will use these requirements to screen applicants and to issue either an offer or a rejection in accordance.
- If there is any doubt about a particular applicant's suitability for a programme, admissions colleagues will refer the application to the relevant academic teams. A decision will then be made in liaison between Admissions and the Curriculum Team, and Executive Team where necessary.
- For select programmes the admissions process will require auditions, interviews or portfolios. This will be facilitated through the admissions team with the final decision made by the academic teams.
- UCEN Manchester has processes to enable the gaining of credit towards courses for prior qualifications and/or learning through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) which are guided by the [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#). However, this is subject to the regulations of the awarding bodies that validate their particular programmes applied to. (Please note UCAS references the above as: Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL))
- For applicants whose first language is not English, UCEN Manchester will use a minimum score for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) to inform part of the selection criteria should the curriculum team ask for results. This is managed through the UCEN Manchester Admissions Team. [IELTS | Welcome to IELTS](#)
- Admissions colleagues process applications through UCAS for Full-time Undergraduates and via internal systems for Part-time, and RPA (Recognition of Prior Achievement) applicants.
- Criminal Conviction Disclosure Risk Assessment (CCDRA) forms are completed for applicants with relevant unspent criminal convictions, in collaboration with external agencies if necessary. Please see section 6.
- Complaints: Applicants who have complaints about the admissions process can raise their concerns through the Compliments and Complaints Policy.

8. Communicating an Offer

Communication with Applicants: UCEN Manchester ensures clear and transparent communication with all applicants, informing them of significant changes to their program at the earliest opportunity.

- Applicants are informed of their offer status through the admissions team, this will be in the form of email confirmation. Additionally, if the applicant has applied through UCAS their UCAS account will be updated.
- UCEN Manchester ensures that all communication with applicants is clear, reliable, and valid. This includes informing applicants of any significant changes to programmes (e.g., restructuring or discontinuation).

9. Data Protection

- The UCEN Manchester Admissions policy and procedure will be conducted in accordance with the LTE Group Data Protection Policy and the relevant data protection legislation. [lte-group-data-protection-policy.pdf](#) (ucenmanchester.ac.uk) Applicant data is handled securely and confidentially, in line with the organization's data protection policies.

10. Monitoring Impact

- The impact of this policy is measured through various methods, including student lived experience surveys, service engagement evaluations, and student attrition/retention data.
- UCEN Manchester is committed to regularly reporting on the policy's impact and ensuring continuous improvement.
- Impact of the Access and Participation Plan: Many students do not experience equality of opportunity in higher education. This is true across the three main stages of a student's higher education journey: access, participation and progression. The Office for Students, as part of the Access and Participation Plan has introduced the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (the EORR) which identifies 12 sector-wide risks that may affect a student's opportunity to access and succeed in higher education. The EORR asks providers to consider which, if any, of their prospective or current students are likely to be affected by the risks, and how these might be mitigated. The Admissions department ensures to provide regular updates and supports the Access and Participation Plan where needed.

11. Other

Flow Chart Process

Application is submitted by applicant through one of the three forms of application. UCAS, RPA Form, or Portal Application

The Admissions Team checks for any Criminal Conviction Declarations, if yes, the UCEN Manchester process for criminal conviction declarations is followed.

The Admissions Team then processes the application based on the admissions handbook timelines and the admissions processes laid out in the admissions process documents by course. See Appendix 11. Other - Associated Policies and Documents

Applicant is given a decision through email correspondence and applicant portal updates on their application.

- **Associated Policies and Documents**

POLICIES	PROCEDURES & OTHER DOCUMENTS
Safeguarding Policy	https://www.ucenmanchester.ac.uk/media/filer_public/26/6c/266ca993-db40-4dac-89fb-85a4aa901bdc/ucen_manchester_safeguarding_policy.pdf
DBS Check Policy	https://www.tmc.ac.uk/media/filer_public/18/db/18db6972-7ef7-4ce4-82c2-b98f955c02bd/dbs_policy_for_students.pdf
Data Protection Policy	ite-group-data-protection-policy.pdf (ucenmanchester.ac.uk)
Recognition of Prior Learning Policy	https://mancoll-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/person/amyj_ucenmanchester_ac_uk/_EYz6zv83D75EvtvB6GCek-0BySZ2J4tBnECRhg6SCr1Big?e=ziD5Kp
Compliments and Complaints and Policy	https://www.ucenmanchester.ac.uk/media/filer_public/ac/15/ac15faeb-a812-4f1e-b6cf-4d6bd3289c13/compliments_and_complaints_policy_24-25.pdf
UCAS Admissions Good Practice	Admissions Good Practice Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Conservatoires, Teacher Training UCAS
UCAS Undergraduate Declaration	UCAS Undergraduate declaration Undergraduate UCAS
UCAS Policies	UCAS' policies Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Conservatoires, Teacher Training, 16-18 Choices UCAS
Competition and Markets Authority – Higher education Undergraduate students: your rights under consumer law	Undergraduate students: your rights under consumer law (publishing.service.gov.uk)
Equal Opportunities Risk Register (EORR)	EORR 12 Risks.docx
UCEN Manchester Admissions Handbook	https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:EU:0d56e6d9-02eb-4bb0-a5d4-700fc14dbe08

- **Definitions**

TERM	DEFINITION
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
RPL, REPL, APL, APEL	Recognition of Prior Learning Recognition of Prior Experience and Learning Accreditation of Prior Learning Accreditation of Prior Experience and Learning
RPA	Record or Prior Acceptance – this is a form of direct application to UCEN Manchester, which is then uploaded in October of the student first academic year to UCAS. Applicants cannot hold a UCAs account and an RPA application.

- **Version Control and Accountability**

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0.1	First Draft				