

QA 05 – ADMISSION OF STUDENTS

This policy applies to the admission of students to a course leading to an Arden University award. Where a course is validated by a partner university or other awarding body then entrance is based on the requirements of that body.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

1. Arden University's admissions policy is consistent with its mission to be an independent Higher Education Institution (HEI) that delivers flexible and accessible UK university courses globally, empowering its learners to realise their life goals and make a difference to the world around them. The policy is reviewed regularly to ensure it meets the OfS Conditions of Registration, expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code) published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), and the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and Home Office and other immigration rules relating to student visa routes and legal right to study based on immigration status, including subsequent amendments.
2. In addition to the entry requirements specific for each course of study, as defined in the relevant course specification, Arden University aims to attract individuals who:
 - Can demonstrate the ability to succeed on their chosen course of study.
 - Will derive benefit from study in relation to personal and career development.
 - Have a commitment and enthusiasm to learn.
3. All applications are considered on individual merit in relation to the aims and learning outcomes of the relevant course of study. In addition to fulfilment of entry requirements applicants are required to demonstrate that they are permitted to study their course, this may include demonstrating the right to study at their chosen location and/or the requirement to successfully apply for a student visa.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

4. Arden University aims to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all applicants, regardless of nationality, age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, marital status, political or religious belief or other unjustifiable grounds.

5. Arden University promotes widening participation and encourages access to all individuals consistent with their aspirations, and their ability to meet the academic demands and professional requirements of the course of study.
6. Applicants with a disability are considered using the same entry requirements as for all other applicants.
7. These applicants are strongly encouraged to disclose the nature of their disability or special educational needs on their application form or to contact Arden University's Wellbeing Services in relation to any concerns or special requirements regarding disability.
8. The specific requirements of students who share a disability on their application form or to the admissions team are referred to the Wellbeing Service Team who will be in touch with information about Wellbeing Services and support available once they become an enrolled student. During enrolment, a student can share further disability information which will be shared with the Wellbeing Services Team who will contact the student for an assessment of their specific needs, and to enable Arden University to make any reasonable adjustments to enable the applicant to study with Arden University.

MONITORING

9. Academic Board monitors Arden University's Admissions Policy, which is reviewed annually.
10. Statistics relating to student admission, progression and retention are shared within Admissions Committee's and used to inform relevant teams and the Academic Board through the annual monitoring process.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

11. Arden University has sole discretion to determine:
 - a. The entry criteria for each course of study leading to an Arden University award.
 - b. The admission of any individual applicant to a particular course against the entry criteria for that course of study.
12. All applications are assessed on an individual basis and admission to an Arden University course of study is based on an assessment of the applicant's relative merits and abilities. As part of the admissions process applicants may be required to attend an interview. This interview would consider motivations, prior experience, suitability as a student, including any student visa requirements and confirm the information provided in the application is valid and an accurate reflection.

13. The principal academic criterion for determining a candidate's suitability for admission to a course is that there is a reasonable expectation that they will be able to fulfil the learning outcomes of the course and achieve the standard required for an award. Arden University will look for evidence of academic achievement as well as personal and work/professional experience that provide an indication of ability to meet the academic demands and any professional requirements of the course.
14. Specific entry criteria are specified in terms of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), and the prior study requirements for the relevant course of study. They may include educational qualifications (including minimum grades to be achieved) and the knowledge and skills required for admission. Where applicable, entry criteria may also include criteria defined by a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB).
15. The university is unable to facilitate enrolment for students who are under 18 at the teaching start date for a course, or, in the case of internationally sponsored students who require a student visa, at the point of CAS issuance. Depending on enrolment deadlines and funding requirements, the university may defer an application to the next appropriate intake before proceeding with an offer to study.
16. Arden University publishes details of the entry criteria for each course of study it offers. Applicants for admission to a course of study must provide evidence that they have satisfied the entry criteria.
17. International qualifications are normally judged against ECCTIS (ENIC)¹ guidelines.
18. Where a course is validated by a partner university or other awarding body then entrance is based on the requirements of that body.
19. Information contained on application forms is normally treated as confidential within Arden University and will only be used by Arden University for the purpose of making an admissions decision. Arden University reserve the right, however, to inform other relevant parties for the purposes of preventing fraud and impropriety e.g. Awarding Bodies, Police, Home Office, UKVI and other relevant authorities.
20. Arden University may, at its discretion, vary its standard offer, considering the individual circumstances of applicants.
21. Arden University may, if it has just cause, withdraw or withhold any offer to study on one of its courses. This may occur post-enrolment or during the admissions process if Arden University subsequently discover that a student has provided inaccurate or incomplete information to the university or other relevant bodies.
22. Except in cases where there have been significant changes to entry requirements, as recorded at Admissions Committee, an offer to study with Arden University is usually

¹ UK ENIC is the National Agency working on behalf of the Government to provide information, advice and expert opinion on qualifications worldwide

academically eligible for up to 12 months from the intake the offer was originally issued for. We reserve the right to not defer an offer if further information becomes available at the point of requesting a deferral.

23. Arden University regularly audit, and review offers made to applicants. If it is discovered that an offer has been made which does not fulfil Arden University entry requirements, we reserve the right to recall or replace an offer to study with the University, although this would only be in exceptional circumstances where we do not have evidence of suitability to study at that level.

APPLICANTS WITH A CRIMINAL CONVICTION

24. In the majority of cases, a prior criminal conviction will not preclude a candidate from being offered a place at Arden University. Such applications will, however, be scrutinised in accordance with QA 49 *Principles and Procedures for the Admission of Students who have a Criminal Conviction* to ensure that none of the following will be put at risk:
- Arden University's students, staff, or the wider Arden University community.
 - The integrity of the course.
 - The integrity of Arden University's processes.
 - Reputation.
25. Arden University reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a place, if the outcome of a disclosure indicates that such a risk exists or that the applicant will not be able to successfully complete the course.

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) AND PRIOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (RPEL)

26. Applicants to a course may be eligible for admission with credit through the recognition of prior learning obtained through academic credits (RPCL) or recognition of prior experiential learning (RPEL). Applicants wishing to apply for RPCL/RPEL must contact Arden University's admissions team and provide the appropriate evidence for the application to be assessed. Applications for RPCL/RPEL will be considered in accordance with Arden University Quality Assurance Document QA6: *Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedures* and any requirements from a Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Body if appropriate.

READMISSION TO A COURSE

27. A student who has exited a course awarded by Arden University with an interim award because they have not fulfilled the requirements of a higher award, or who has been

withdrawn from the course on the grounds of academic failure may not be readmitted to the same or equivalent course, or a course that includes a previously failed core module within a period of three years from the date of withdrawal.

28. Applications for readmission to a different course may be considered, in exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis, subject to a written case being made. An interview will be conducted by the relevant Admissions Tutor and will take full account of the student's previous performance at the University. In the case of UKVI sponsored students this will also be subject to full consideration to the student's circumstances in relation to UKVI regulations relating to academic progression and study time limits.
29. Where readmission with credit is sought, cases will be considered in accordance with the University's normal regulations with regards to the Recognition of Prior Learning.
30. Students excluded due to Academic Integrity and Misconduct offences, or disciplinary matters will not be considered for readmission to any Arden University course.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

31. For candidates whose first language is not English, evidence is required of spoken and written ability in English through approved tests such as IELTS. For an undergraduate course an overall IELTS score of 6.0 is required, with a minimum of 5.5 in each component. Postgraduate courses typically require an overall score of 6.5, with a minimum of 6.0 in each component or equivalent.
32. Student visa applicants must take an English test through a UKVI approved Secure English Language Test (SELT) if required to meet UKVI regulations. Approved providers are listed at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prove-your-english-language-abilities-with-a-secure-english-language-test-selt#approved-test-providers>.
33. Exceptions to the English Language test requirement may arise where the candidate has recently studied at a suitable level of English.
34. Should it come to the University's attention at any point that a student is believed to be unable to communicate effectively or engage with their academic studies due to English language capabilities, Arden University reserves the right to re-test the student by any means deemed appropriate. If the student is unable to improve their English language skills to the required standard, or does not engage with the re-test request, Arden University reserves the right to refuse enrolment or withdraw the student from their course.

INFORMATION AND ADVICE TO APPLICANTS

35. Arden University is committed to providing clear, accurate, complete and accessible information on its courses, relevant entry requirements and associated admissions procedures. All applicants should expect and receive fair and reasonable treatment during the admissions process by Arden University, our employees and our partners.
36. Arden University strives to ensure that clear, accessible information is made available regarding any non-academic requirements for entry to its courses. Where additional methods of assessment (e.g. portfolio submission) are used to select candidates, this will be explicitly stated for the benefit of applicants in Arden University's brochures and on Arden University website.
37. Entry criteria are published on the Arden University website and within Arden University programme specifications published within our policies and standards.
38. Changes to any of Arden University's courses involving significant restructuring or discontinuation will be communicated to applicants affected by such changes at the earliest possible opportunity. All courses may be subject to a minimum cohort, if this is not met applicants will be communicated with to offer an alternative course or a later start date, where applicable. The Admissions team will send communications to applicants affected by changes to course running status, and signpost applicants to next steps available.

RESPONSIBILITIES

39. Applications are processed by Arden University's Admissions team. Admissions decisions are made under the scrutiny of a suitably qualified Admissions Tutor.
40. The Head of Admissions is responsible for ensuring that the admissions processes are clear and updated regularly and in accordance with this policy document.
41. The Admissions Committee has responsibility for reviewing the Admissions Policy annually and reporting to Academic Board on the monitoring of its implementation and compliance through monitoring processes.

TIMEFRAMES AND ENROLMENT

42. Arden University is committed to the assessment and processing of applications in a timely manner, with specific timescales tailored to the start date for which applicants have applied. Scheduled deadlines for each intake in the line with the University academic calendars are published and maintained on an annual basis.
43. For applicants seeking RPCL and other highly specialised or complex non-standard cases, Arden University may require a longer period to assess the application.
44. An offer to study a course with Arden University is issued subject to the course running

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the specific location and mode of attendance. If an offer is issued for a course that subsequently does not run, the university will communicate this to the applicant by email, who can request to be considered for an alternative course or start date where applicable.

45. Upon accepting an offer and capacity for the chosen course is confirmed, an applicant with an unconditional offer will be invited to enrol via email. Applicants are required to complete 'MyEnrolment' ahead of the enrolment window closing, failure to complete enrolment will result in the offer holder not being enrolled as a student for the intake. Where possible the applicant will have the option to defer to the next available intake. If a CAS has been issued for a start date that is no longer available, the CAS will be withdrawn, and any subsequent Student visa associated with it will be cancelled.
46. The admissions team reserve the right to update an applicant's start date for any applications received, and being processed, whereby the intake an applicant originally applied for is no longer available for offers.

FEEDBACK TO UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

47. Feedback is provided to unsuccessful applicants by the admissions or recruitment teams. Feedback will normally only be provided to the applicants and those authorised to act on their behalf, and not to any third party e.g. parents or other family members, teachers, employers.
48. In the case of a rejection of your application to study with Arden University, we will not normally consider a new application for a minimum of 12 months. In the case of fraud or impropriety as part of the application process, we reserve the right to not reconsider an applicant for admission in the future.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (FOR COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS)

49. Where an applicant believes that their application has not been dealt with fairly, or in accordance with Arden University's policies, principles and procedures, they should first put their case in writing, addressed in the first instance, to the Head of Admissions.

If the above cannot resolve the matter, then applicants should follow the Arden University's Complaints procedure ([QA48 Student Complaints Procedure](#)). Arden University will normally respond to all matters relating to complaints about admissions within 20 working days.



APPEALS PROCEDURE (FOR APPEALS CONCERNING DECISIONS ON ELIGIBILITY FOR A COURSE)

50. Applicants that wish to appeal a decision concerning their eligibility for a course should submit a request in writing to admissions@arden.ac.uk. This should detail the basis for the appeal and include any additional information or evidence (e.g. further qualifications or references) that was not provided with the original application.
51. Appeals will be considered by the relevant Admissions Tutor and outcomes will normally be provided in writing within 10 working days.
52. In exceptional cases, if it is not possible to meet these timescales, or if further evidence is required, the applicant will be notified in writing of the reason for the delay and a revised timeframe for an outcome will be provided.
53. Please note that the Office for Students (OIA) cannot consider complaints or appeals regarding admissions, unless the person complaining is a former student applying for re-admission, and the complaint is directly connected to their time as a student.

For more admissions information and advice, please contact admissions@arden.ac.uk.

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