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Admissions Policy

Introduction

1. This policy details Queen Mary's principles and procedures for selecting applicants for its degree programmes. It takes account of the [Quality Assurance Agency's Code of Practice](#), the advice available through Supporting Professionalism in Admissions and the outcome of the Schwartz Report (Review of Admissions to Higher Education 2004).
2. This policy is concerned with general principles which are applied College-wide across all schools and institutes within Queen Mary. The policy informs, and is the framework for, admissions requirements of individual degree programmes. Details of these programmes can be found on Queen Mary website at <http://www.qmul.ac.uk>.
3. The principles of the Admissions Policy are designed to reflect and be consistent with a number of other College policies, notably Queen Mary's [Strategic Plan 2010-15](#); the [Learning and Teaching Strategy](#); and the [Widening Participation Strategy](#).
4. The Strategic Plan sets out the aims of moving to the top decile of undergraduate entry tariff points, increasing the numbers of taught post graduate students and doubling the numbers of postgraduate research students.
5. Queen Mary is committed to attracting the most able students and to supporting the highest standards of student experience, as demonstrated in the [Student Support Strategy](#). Queen Mary believes that this approach applies from the first point of contact with Queen Mary, including enquiries made by prospective students and the entirety of the application process from the submission of application to a student's arrival and enrolment at Queen Mary.

Admissions Criteria - general

6. Queen Mary is committed to recruiting students of the highest academic calibre. Admission to Queen Mary is based on academic merit and on the proven ability of the applicant to achieve success on their chosen programme of study.
7. Queen Mary is committed to excellence in teaching and learning and to attracting and supporting the most highly qualified and motivated students. Accordingly, admissions criteria are established to ensure that only those students who have proven they can academically succeed on their chosen programme of study are admitted to Queen Mary.

8. Queen Mary is committed to ensuring that its admissions assessment methods are reliable, non-discriminatory and give an accurate reflection of potential to succeed. All programmes of study have specific entrance requirements, however all subjects will pay particular attention to:
 - academic ability and potential
 - motivation and suitability for the chosen programme of study
 - commitment and self-discipline
 - evidence of knowledge and understanding of the applicant's chosen subject area
 - ability to cope with the challenges of a university education for undergraduate applicants and the ability to cope with the challenges of postgraduate study for masters and doctoral applications.
9. Queen Mary will reject applications if there are no places available on the programme, regardless of whether the applicant meets the admissions criteria.
10. Queen Mary reserves the right to set additional entry requirements for individual applicants.

Admissions Criteria - undergraduate

11. In assessing applications to undergraduate programmes, Queen Mary will look at:
 - Academic record, including, but not exclusively, GCSE, AS and A-level grades (or equivalent) or predicted grades and other qualifications within the new 14-19 Curriculum.
 - School/College reference
 - Personal statement
 - Submitted work (where requested)
 - English language ability (in the case of applicants whose first language is not English or where other circumstances indicate this is necessary)
 - Test results, where a specified test forms part of the application process (such as the UKCAT for MB,BS degrees)
 - Performance at interview (if applicable)
12. In accordance with guidance from the Equality Challenge Unit, Queen Mary, from September 2009, will not exclude mother tongue languages from the subjects applicants can include in their tariff score. This excludes those programmes which require a specific combination of subjects, or subject areas, as part of the criteria for admission (for example Medicine and Dentistry).
13. The majority of academic departments will not accept A-Level General Studies as part of the tariff score. Some academic departments will not accept other subjects and/or qualifications. All decisions to exclude subjects are approved by the Admissions and Teaching Resource Planning Group.

14. Further information on acceptable qualifications can be found at <http://www.qmul.ac.uk/undergraduate/entry/index.html>

Admissions criteria – postgraduate taught programmes (MSc/PgDip)

15. In assessing applicants for taught postgraduate programmes, Queen Mary will look at:

- Academic record as demonstrated through undergraduate study.
- Reference from place of undergraduate study
- Relevant professional qualifications and experience, where applicable
- The personal statement
- English language ability (in the case of applicants whose first language is not English or where other circumstances indicate this is necessary)
- Other test results where it forms a part of the application process

16. The minimum requirement for postgraduate study is normally a second class honours degree from a UK university or the equivalent level of achievement from an overseas university. Senate, or its delegated authority, is responsible for approving designated equivalents where they diverge from the NARIC tariff.

17. Exceptionally, and at the discretion of the School Dean for Taught Programmes, applicants not in possession of a second class honours degree may be admitted to a postgraduate programme where they are able to demonstrate relevant professional experience and/or qualifications, and potential to be successful at postgraduate level. Faculty Deans for Taught Programmes will take an overview of admissions decisions relating to such applicants.

Admissions criteria – postgraduate research programmes

18. In assessing applicants for postgraduate research programmes, Queen Mary will look at:

- Academic record as demonstrated through undergraduate and, where applicable, postgraduate study
- Potential to undertake research eg as demonstrated through a masters dissertation
- Reference from place of postgraduate study
- Relevant professional qualifications and experience, where applicable.
- The personal statement
- English language ability (in the case of applicants whose first language is not English or where other circumstances indicate this is necessary)
- Other test results where it forms a part of the application process

19. The minimum entry requirement for a postgraduate research programme is normally an upper second class honours degree, or a master's degree (including integrated masters) from a UK university or an equivalent level of achievement from an overseas university.

Interviews

20. Queen Mary may decide to interview applicants for a variety of reasons. In some cases interviews will be used to assess applicants whose personal statement and reference suggest that their academic potential may be greater than that indicated by the applicant's academic qualifications. The purpose of conducting the interview will be communicated to applicants prior to interview.

Contextual Factors

21. When evaluating the achievement and potential of applicants Queen Mary may consider the educational and social context of the applicant.

English language requirements

22. Applicants whose first language is not English will be required to provide evidence that their English language ability is of a sufficiently high standard to cope with the academic demands of their preferred programme of study. This evidence must be in the form of a recognised English language qualification. The minimum IELTS scores for each discipline are listed in the below table, some programmes in each area may require higher scores. Details for individual programmes and equivalent standards of other English Language ability tests can be found at:

<http://www.qmul.ac.uk/international/englishlanguage/requirements/index.html>

Undergraduate programmes

Social Sciences	6.5
Sciences	6.5
Arts (including Law)	7.0

Postgraduate programmes (taught and research)

Social Sciences	7.0
Sciences	6.5
Arts (including Law)	7.0

23. In addition to the minimum scores listed above academic departments may require students to obtain minimum scores in any component/s of the English language qualification.
24. When a student scores slightly below Queen Mary's English language requirements Queen Mary may admit the student to a programme that includes an integrated pre-sessional English stage. In such cases progression beyond the pre-sessional stage is dependent upon achievement at the required standard.

Fair Access

25. Queen Mary is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all applicants. Applications are welcomed from students with excellent academic potential from all backgrounds.

26. Queen Mary does not operate any admissions quotas that either advantage or disadvantage any group of applicants. Applications for admissions to all programmes of study are considered without regard to any inappropriate distinction. Applicants should note that Queen Mary's regulations require students to ensure that a particular programme is suitable to their needs prior to registration and that students are expected participate fully in the teaching, learning and assessment of the programme of study. Exceptions to these regulations may be considered under grounds of disability as detailed in paragraph 22.
27. Queen Mary believes that a diverse student population is important from an educational and social perspective and is committed to maintaining its excellent record of diversity. It believes this is most fairly achieved through outreach and widening participation activities focused on supporting academic achievement amongst groups currently under-represented in higher education, rather than by applying quotas at the point of admission.
28. Queen Mary welcomes applications from students with disabilities and other learning support needs; applications will be considered on the same academic grounds as all other applicants. Queen Mary will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of disabled applicants and will make communications available in an accessible format.
29. Applicants are encouraged to disclose any disability at the point of application. Applicants who disclose a disability will be contacted by the Disability and Dyslexia Service with information about the support they can receive during the course of their studies. All information regarding disability is covered by the Data Protection Act and will not be disclosed to any person(s) outside of Queen Mary.
30. Queen Mary will accept applications from applicants who will not have reached the age of 18 upon the start of their programme of study in line with any policies that it has in place on the admission of under 18s. However, Queen Mary reserves the right to reject applications on health and safety grounds where there are insufficient facilities available to support and protect students under the age of 18.
31. Queen Mary ensures that its bursaries policies and student recruitment and schools outreach plans support the above objectives of its Admissions Policy.

Information Provision

32. Queen Mary is committed to transparency in its admissions processes. Queen Mary will seek to provide as detailed information as possible about admissions requirements and other matters that will enable prospective or current applicants to decide whether study at Queen Mary would be suitable for them and whether they are likely to meet our requirements. Information is provided in a variety of forms: the undergraduate prospectus relating to the year of admission; Queen

Mary website; in programme brochures and similar information; and in UCAS profiles.

33. Queen Mary undertakes to provide promotional information that is accurate, relevant and current. This undertaking applies to both in written material (such as the prospectus and the website) and through other activities such as open days, recruitment fairs and communications arranged by agents commissioned by Queen Mary.

Feedback

34. Queen Mary undertakes to give a reason for non-admission to unsuccessful undergraduate applicants. Undergraduate applicants who want more detailed feedback should contact the Admissions and Recruitment Office.

Decision Making and Offers

35. Each academic school/institute is responsible for developing its own admissions criteria within the broad requirements of this policy. Admissions criteria are initially approved by the relevant Faculty Board and subsequent amendments to admissions criteria are approved by the Admissions and Teaching Resource Planning Group.
36. To ensure that all admissions decisions comply with Queen Mary admissions policy all offers of admission and rejections are made by the Admissions and Recruitment Office. This process ensures that all admissions decisions comply with both Queen Mary's Admissions Policy and the approved programme entry requirements. Only offers confirmed in writing by the Admissions and Recruitment Office and/or UCAS are valid and all other offers are invalid until confirmed by the Admissions and Recruitment Office.
37. Applicants who do not meet the criteria for admission to their preferred programme of study may be offered a place on an alternate programme if appropriate.
38. Offers of admission will contain the following information:
 - Any conditions of admission
 - Any English language requirements
 - Details of fees and living costs and details of any studentships/scholarships (where applicable)
 - Full details of the title of the programme of study, start date, duration and mode of study
 - Any other appropriate terms and conditions.
39. All staff in the Admissions Office receive training development to ensure they are conversant in all aspects of the admissions process. All staff members working with admissions are conversant with Queen Mary regulations and national

standards, procedures and guidelines. The Admissions Office provides regular training on admissions policies and procedures for academic department.

40. The Head of Admissions holds training sessions for Admissions Selectors regularly, especially those new to the role, as well as providing regular updates on changes to qualifications and procedures
41. By accepting the offer of a place, applicants agree to adhere to the rules and regulations of Queen Mary.

Criminal Convictions and Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks

42. Queen Mary will disregard any criminal convictions which are spent under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974), unless the programme of study is likely to bring the student into contact with children or vulnerable adults. Applicants for programmes that involve contact with children or vulnerable adults (such as the BDS and MB,BS) will be required to obtain enhanced disclosure from the CRB. All offers to programmes that require CRB checks are provisional until Queen Mary has received a satisfactory CRB check.
43. Where an applicant has an unspent (or spent in certain cases) conviction or caution Queen Mary will consider the application in light of the applicant's circumstances and the nature of the programme of study. If Queen Mary decides not to offer the applicant a place on a programme of study the applicant will be informed in writing of the reasons for the decision.
44. Applicants who have convictions that have resulted in a prison sentences will be asked to give Queen Mary permission to contact the applicant's probation officer.

Appeals and Complaints

Appeals

45. Applicants are advised on the mechanism for appeals when sent their letter of rejection. Applicants who wish to appeal against Queen Mary's decision to reject their application should do so using the Admissions Appeals Procedure which is based on the same criteria and approach as the College Appeal Regulations. The Admissions Appeals Procedure is given in the annex to this policy.

and put their appeal in writing, addressing the appeal criteria, to the Senior Assistant Registrar for Student Appeals, Complaints, Conduct and Enhancement.

Complaints

46. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the way in which an application was handled. Complaints must be submitted to the Academic Secretary or nominee who will investigate and respond to the complaint.

Plagiarism and Falsified Applications

47. Applicants should be aware that UCAS routinely scans personal statements for plagiarism. Queen Mary will withdraw any offers made to applicants who are found to have submitted a personal statement that contains any plagiarised text.
48. Queen Mary will withdraw any offers made to applicants who are found to have supplied false information or omitted relevant information in their application. If a student registered with Queen Mary is found to have submitted a fraudulent application their registration will be terminated. There will be no refund of tuition fees or deposits for students who are found to have submitted fraudulent applications. There is no statute of limitations on this rule.

Governance and Monitoring

49. The Admissions Policy and revisions to it are approved by Senate.
50. The Vice-Principal (Teaching and Learning) provides strategic academic leadership for all admissions matters and is chair of the Admissions and Teaching Resource Planning Group.
51. The Academic Secretary is responsible for the delivery of administrative services that support admissions and recruitment processes.
52. Heads of School/Institute are accountable for admissions within their schools/institutes, although the day to day responsibility for processing applications will be delegated to one or more Admissions Selectors.
53. Responsibility for monitoring admissions operations is held by the Admissions and Teaching Research Planning Group, a sub-group of the Queen Mary Senior Executive (QMSE).
54. The Admissions and Teaching Resource Planning Group assigns admissions targets to departments, monitors admissions progress throughout the year and approves changes to admissions requirements.

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June 2009 v 6

Updated: Wendy Appleby, Marlon Gomes
July 2010

Revised following Senate on 7 October 2010.

Approved: Senate on 7 October 2010 with final sign off by the Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning on 16 November 2010

Equality Impact Assessment

1. Is there any aspect of the policy or procedure that is likely to have an adverse affect on members of any of the six key groups defined in equalities legislation? (i.e. according to age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race and religious belief)

The admissions policy is compliant with the relevant equality and diversity legislation. Queen Mary ensures that the admissions processes are implemented fairly and equitably for all applicants in accordance with Section 10 of the QAA's Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education (September 2006).

Queen Mary's regulations require students to choose a programme of study that is suitable to their needs and requirements. Queen Mary will not admit students who refuse to conduct standard medical practice or meet other requirements of the profession (for example the mandatory wearing of short-sleeved outfits to prevent MRSA transmission) to medical programmes. Queen Mary cannot make any amendments to programmes on the grounds of religious, or any other, belief.

The GMC are currently developing guidelines on the admission of disabled students to medical programmes. Once these guidelines are developed the policy will be updated.

There are potential issues surrounding age discrimination as Queen Mary cannot admit students aged under 18 at the time of enrolment unless there is suitable support in place and on the proviso that there are no health and safety issues.

There are no anticipated adverse affects on student on the grounds of race, gender or sexual orientation. Queen Mary will make all reasonable adjustments for students with a disability but notes that it may not be possible to amend programme content in all cases.

2. What mechanisms are in place to monitor the application of this policy across all potential equality groups? Please explain.

An assessment of the policy is carried out on an annual basis by Academic Board and will be made available for consideration by Queen Mary's Equal Opportunities Committee.

The Head of Admissions and Recruitment is responsible for implementing and monitoring the necessary procedures to ensure this policy is followed correctly, consistently and fairly for all applicants.

ATRPG will be responsible for the monitoring of the equality-related data surrounding admissions.

3. Can the differences be justified?

Yes the differences stated under question one can be justified. With regards medical programmes Queen Mary is required by the General Medical Council to ensure that its students can meet the standards of the profession and, furthermore, legislation relating to health and safety in the work place (for instance wearing appropriate clothes to prevent transmitting infections) over-rides all equality legislation.

Queen Mary has to assure its academic standards and has to ensure that students meet the requirements of an approved programme of study before graduating. In this regard Queen Mary cannot excuse a student from part of the curriculum on the grounds that the curriculum is contrary to their religions beliefs. Full details of programme curriculum are available upon application and Queen Mary expects applicants to be fully cognisant of the nature of their degree programme before application.

The caveats on admitting students aged under 18 at the time of enrolment can be justified on legal, and health and safety grounds.

4. How does the policy support the student experience and Queen Mary's management of its academic standards?

The policy promotes delivery of Queen Mary's commitment to providing a fair admissions process which embraces widening participation, but also ensures that students are appropriately qualified and prepared for their chosen programme of study. It ensures that its selection policies and procedures are fairly and consistently applied by all staff involved in the admissions process.

5. How is this policy helping to raise achievement levels and promote equality of opportunity? (If not applicable, please explain)

This policy helps promote equality of opportunity by ensuring that all applicants are considered without regard to any inappropriate distinction. It promotes achievement by ensuring that the most appropriate applicants are admitted to Queen Mary regardless of their background.

Admissions Appeal Procedure

Introduction

This procedure provides applicants with details about how they can appeal against an admissions decision made by Queen Mary.

Grounds for appeal

Applicants should note that the most common reason for declining an application for admission is that the applicant does not meet the entry requirements either in terms of the subjects required or achievement of the required grades. Applications may also be declined where the programme is full for the period for which the application is made.

An applicant may appeal on one or more of the following grounds:

- i. Procedural error where the process leading to the decision being appealed against was not conducted in accordance with QMUL's procedure, such that there is reasonable doubt as to whether the outcome might have been different had the error not occurred. Procedural error includes alleged administrative/clerical error and bias in the operation of the procedure.
- ii. That exceptional circumstances, illness or other relevant factors had, for good reason, not been made known at the time or had not been taken into account properly.

'Good reason' requires an applicant to demonstrate circumstances outside his/her control that prevented the relevant factors being disclosed at the appropriate time. Personal embarrassment, or an unwillingness to disclose personal circumstances, does not count as 'good reason' for the purposes of these Regulations.

All appeals will be considered on their merit, however appeals that are based exclusively on one or more of these grounds will be rejected automatically by the Academic Secretary:

- i. Appeals against the academic judgment of selectors.
- ii. Appeals where the application was received after the programme is full.
- iii. The retrospective reporting of extenuating circumstances that might have been reasonably made known at the time.
- iv. Failure by the applicant to attain the entry qualifications specified as conditions of the offer.

In such cases, the decision of the Academic Secretary is final.

Making a request for appeal

The applicant must submit a request for an appeal, in writing, to the Academic Secretary, or nominee. An appeal request must normally be made within 14 days of the formal notification of the rejection decision that is being appealed against. Usually this will be the date given on the decision letter. The Academic Secretary has the discretion to consider and allow late requests where the applicant is able to demonstrate good reason for the delay.

The applicant must detail in the request for an appeal the grounds on which their appeal is based and outlining the supporting evidence that will be submitted. Supporting evidence should be submitted by the applicant within 7 days and be of a form that provides proof of the points covered in the written request for appeal (e.g. a medical certificate). The Academic Secretary has the discretion to allow late submission of evidence where the applicant is able to demonstrate good reason for the delay.

In the request for an appeal, the applicant must provide his or her full name, the programme and year of entry applied for, applicant number, details of the decision being appealed against and the ground(s) on which the appeal is made.

Actions on receipt of a request for appeal

On receipt of the appeal request, the Academic Secretary or nominee will make such enquiries into the request for appeal that he/she considers necessary. These enquiries may involve interviewing the applicant, consulting documentation from the process leading to the original decision, and discussion with the relevant person/body responsible for the original decision. The Academic Secretary will either decide to reject the appeal automatically because it falls into the criteria given above or consult with the relevant Dean for Taught Programmes to form a joint decision on the appeal. Where the appeal is rejected, the applicant will be informed of this and the reasons for the decision. Where the appeal is to be upheld, the applicant will be informed of this and the application will be reconsidered through the admissions process.

The joint decision of the Academic Secretary and the Dean for Taught Programmes is final.

November 2010