UK Quality Code 2024: Institutional Mapping

Principle 9: Recruiting, selecting and admitting students

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Authored: July 2025

PRINCIPLE 9: RECRUITING, SELECTING AND ADMITTING STUDENTS

Introduction

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code) articulates the principles of UK higher education for securing academic standards and assuring and enhancing quality. The Quality Code is a sector-led reference point which can be used in a range of flexible ways. It enables providers to evaluate their policies and practices with reference to Sector-Agreed Principles and it aligns with key international reference points including the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

The Quality Code is comprised of two key elements: (i) sector-agreed principles; and (ii) key practices. Sector-agreed principles identify the features that are fundamental to securing academic standards and offering a high-quality student learning experience. Key practices set out how a provider can demonstrate they are adhering to the sector-agreed principles. There are 12 principles and each has a set of key practices which providers can follow to demonstrate how they are adhering to that principle.

Under the theme, implementing the approach to quality enhancement and standards, **Principle 9: Recruiting, selecting and admitting students** outlines the key practices regarding prospective students and applicants. In doing so, the Quality Code sets out the following: *Providers operate recruitment, selection and admissions processes that are transparent, fair and inclusive. Providers maintain and publish accurate, relevant and accessible information about their provision, enabling students to make informed choices about their studies and future aspirations.*

In undertaking this mapping to the UK Quality Code, a number of stakeholders were consulted across the University to ensure that the information presented is as accurate and up-to-date as possible. Additionally, it should be noted that the information contained within each section of the mapping is current as at time of publication. Further updates to the UK Quality Code Mapping will follow on an annual basis and will be overseen by the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC).

Key Practices

Key Practices	University Commentary	Supporting Documentation
(a) Policies and procedures for application, recruitment, selection and admission to programmes are reliable, fair, transparent and accessible, including processes for the recognition of prior learning. Similar and proportionate arrangements are in place for modules and other units of study.	We ensure that admission is based entirely on merit and on the basis to achieve as is stated in the University's Admissions Policy. The University's Admissions Policy and guidelines for admission are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that these continue to set out fair, reliable, and appropriate assessment methods and criteria. Entry requirements are outlined transparently in all recruitment material ensuring applicants are fully appraised of these requirements. Dedicated webpages ensure that different cohorts of applicants are informed of the timescales associated with each type of application and who to expect communications to come from.

The admissions process is managed by a central team led by the Directorate of Global Engagement, Marketing and Recruitment (GEMR), and selection is carried out by trained, professional admissions staff and by trained academic staff.

The University has a long-standing commitment to widening access. Widening Access webpages provides clear information on the criteria which the University will consider when making an Adjusted or Access Threshold Offer. Our Contextualised Admissions and Access Thresholds Policy provides further detail around the criteria used. The University's Widening Access Strategy is informed by national policy. This area of policy is overseen by the University's Student Recruitment Committee. The University's Senior Management Team considers actively the direction to be taken by the institution in this area.

Additionally, a series of Learning and Teaching Enhancement Programme (LTEP) projects focused on direct entrants and articulating students take place. The project aims to enhance the academic resilience of advanced entry students. It is led by academics in the School of Psychology in conjunction with colleagues in Widening Access and Articulations. The LTEP webpages provide further detail in this regard.

Separately, the University is actively engaged, as part of Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme (STEP) in the Regional Engagement Network project. As part of the project, there is a focus on articulation and other mobility routes; in particular, how these can be strengthened working collaboratively with | Accreditation of Prior Learning (Policy) Admissions Policy (Policy) All Entry Requirements (Webpage) Appeals and Complaints (Students) (Webpage) Application to the University (Webpage) Contextualised Admissions Policy (Policy) Example: History Entry Requirements (Webpage) Example: Interviews for MA Education Example: Interviews for Medicine Example: Interviews for Primary Education Example: Interviews for Secondary Education Learning and Teaching Enhancement Programme (LTEP): Advanced Entry Students Project (Webpage) Quality Assurance Committee (Webpage) Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme (Webpage) Student Recruitment Committee (Webpage) Widening Access Criteria (Webpage) |

	colleagues across the sector in the region, both higher and further education partners.	
	Selection criteria are set out clearly on webpages managed by the Directorate of GEMR, with any changes to entry criteria considered and approved by the University's Student Recruitment Committee. Following which, approval is sought on behalf of Senate from the Quality Assurance Committee. Criteria are applied by staff consistently at a programme specific level and are designed to take account of an applicant's ability to cope with the challenges of a university education in addition to academic achievement to date. For certain degree programmes, e.g. education, music, medicine, interviews and auditions are utilised to assess prospective students in the selection procedures. Prospective students are provided with information to enable them to prepare for, and engage with, the process.	
	Appeals and complaints from applicants are considered under the appropriate University Policy on Student Appeals and Complaint Handling Procedure.	
(b) Providers offer information that supports prospective students, and their advisors for recruitment and widening access purposes, in making informed decisions. Providers meet their legal and regulatory obligations in relation to the information presented about themselves and their provision or any changes they make to programmes and modules.	The University ensures that admission is based entirely on merit and on the basis to achieve as is stated in the Admissions Policy. Entry qualifications are transparently set out in all relevant material. Entry requirements are outlined transparently in all recruitment material ensuring applicants are fully appraised of these requirements.	Admissions Policy (Policy) All Entry Requirements (Webpage) Contextualised Admissions Policy (Policy) Entry from College (Webpage) Equality Impact Assessment (Webpage) Example: Aberdeen Global Scholarship (Webpage) Finance and Funding (Webpage) Hope Heroes: Alumni (Webpage) Information Guides and Advice, Undergraduate (Webpage) On Demand Studies (Webpage) Open Days, Events and Visits (Webpage) Postgraduate Taught Studies (Webpage) Refugees and Asylum Seekers (Webpage) Undergraduate Studies (Webpage) Unibuddy (Webpage) Widening Access Criteria (Webpage)
	The University provides print and digital material specifically aimed at School and College partners and offer regular events, both in-person and virtually to supplement this material.	
	In addition to events, there are other ways prospective students can contact the University when seeking information enabling them to receive tailored responses to their specific queries: ▪ E-mail, *via* study@abdn.ac.uk ▪ enquiry form ("Enquire Now" option on web pages) ▪ chat option on web pages (Unibuddy)	
	The University has a long-standing commitment to widening access. Widening Access webpages provides clear information on the criteria which the University will consider when making an Adjusted or Access Threshold Offer.	

	The University has a range of scholarships targeted at those from low- income backgrounds which are actively promoted through our webpages. In line with all university policies, those associated with admission are subject to assessment under Equality Impact legislation to ensure specific groups of individuals are not obstructed from undertaking any programme within the University.	
(c) Staff, student representatives and external partners engaged in the delivery of recruitment, selection, admissions and widening access processes are appropriately trained and resourced.	Processes and activities relating to admissions, recruitment and widening access are managed by central teams led by the Directorate of Global Engagement, Marketing and Recruitment (GEMR), who receive regular and appropriate training, support, and professional development. The team's activities include engaging with College partners and sector-wide networking groups, and engagement with professional development provided by these bodies (for example: UCAS policy groups and UCAS Standing Group; Higher Education Liaison Officers (HELOA); its Scottish counterpart (SHELOA); Access Delivery Group; and Scottish Widening Access Managers Group, for which the Access & Articulation Manager Chairs). The University has strong regional and national links in relation to widening access, with representation on the Universities & Colleges Scotland Joint Articulation Group (JAG), Scottish Widening Access Managers Group (SWAMG), for which the Access & Articulation Manager chairs, Access Delivery Group, and Scottish Community of Access and Participation Practitioners (SCAPP). To ensure appropriate allocation of resources, volumes of applications across the application cycle are monitored on a regular basis and resources allocated or re-directed to address any changing pattern of demand. All staff are required to complete Equality & Diversity training.	
(d) All teams involved in the application, selection and admissions processes ensure information about the applicant journey is consistent and clear. Specific elements of the selection process are clearly defined and any programme or	The admissions process is managed by a central team led by the Directorate of Global Engagement, Marketing and Recruitment (GEMR), and selection is carried out by trained, professional admissions staff and by trained academic staff. Selection criteria are set out clearly on webpages managed by the Directorate of GEMR. Criteria are applied by staff consistently at a programme specific level and are designed to take account of an applicant's ability to cope with the	Undergraduate Prospectus (Webpage)

| module changes that can impact decision making are communicated swiftly and consistently to enable all parties to exercise informed choice. | challenges of a university education in addition to academic achievement to date. For certain degree programmes, e.g. education, music, medicine, interviews and auditions are utilised to assess prospective students in the selection procedures. Prospective students are provided with information to enable them to prepare for, and engage with, the process.

Any programme or module changes are communicated as quickly as possible via email to enquirers, applicants, and offer holders. Where possible alternative programmes and modules are offered. Prospectus webpages and external course listings are reviewed regularly and updated as soon as any programme or module changes have been made. | |