



Quality Assurance Code of Practice

Recruitment, Selection and Admission of Student Apprentices

This document is primarily intended for:

Staff working in, or in conjunction with recruitment, outreach, or admissions teams
 Admissions Tutors
 Exchange co-ordinators
 Staff in marketing teams

Queries:

First point of contact & Technical Specialists –

Head of UG Admissions / Head of PGT Admissions
 Academic Registry

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1 Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 This statement outlines the principles and practices underlying the University's procedures for the recruitment, selection, and admission of Student Apprentices. Departments should also consult with Academic Registry for advice and guidance on course and learner eligibility set out in the [Apprenticeship Funding Rules](#) (Annex A).
- 1.2 This statement applies to the formal application process for all apprenticeship courses leading to an award of the University of Bath. This includes:
 - undergraduate degrees
 - postgraduate taught degrees
- 1.3 **Recruitment** encompasses a broad range of activities and initiatives undertaken by the University, including outreach, events, and various marketing activities, with the

aim to ultimately encourage prospective employers and Student Apprentices to apply to undertake an apprenticeship course at the University. For the purposes of this statement, recruitment refers to the process by which the University shares information and advice with prospective employers and Student Apprentices to inform their decision-making. This includes activities targeted at widening access to the University, even where they are the responsibility of separate teams.

- 1.4 **Admissions** encompasses the principles and practices for an employer to nominate a Student Apprentice for a place on an apprenticeship course, the process for a Student Apprentice to apply for and the University to confirm such a place. **Selection** encompasses the principles and practices used during admissions to determine the suitability for a Student Apprentice to undertake an apprenticeship course, based on the applicant meeting the course and learner eligibility criteria set out in the ESFA Funding Rules (see Annex A).

2 Principles

- 2.1 The University admits Student Apprentices onto an apprenticeship course as part of a cohort. Each cohort will have a set number of places. For each cohort, the University selects Student Apprentices for offer based on meeting the course and learner eligibility criteria and considering each Student's Apprentice's previous qualifications and experience.
- 2.2 Prospective applicants for an apprenticeship course apply either directly to the employer, or through the University if recruitment is managed by the University on behalf of the employer.
- 2.3 The University must be satisfied that there is evidence demonstrating that each Student Apprentice has the potential to succeed on their chosen course.
- 2.4 The University seeks to promote its provision as widely as possible to attract suitably qualified candidates. Whilst specific recruitment activities or initiatives may be targeted or narrow in scope, the University will make available to all prospective applicants and employers information that helps them to make an informed decision.
- 2.5 The University aims to ensure that its selection and admissions processes are always consistent and transparent.
- 2.6 The University will ensure it meets all requirements under consumer protection law. This includes providing accurate and accessible information to prospective Student Apprentices and their employers.
- 2.7 Provided that a prospective Student Apprentice meets the apprenticeship eligibility criteria, their application is considered holistically based on academic merit and, where appropriate, an applicant's individual experiences and circumstances.

Academic consideration does not include an applicant's additional needs, criminal convictions or right to study and these are considered through separate processes.

- 2.8 The University will ensure its recruitment and admissions processes protect free speech and academic freedom. An applicant's opinions or ideas will not be considered in any selection or admissions decision, and the University cannot revoke an offer of a place on the grounds of an applicant's lawful speech.
- 2.9 The University will ensure its recruitment, selection and admissions processes comply with Equality Duty (including those laid out in Equality Act (2010)).
- 2.10 The University will ensure recruitment, selection and admissions activities and processes are compliant with the principles of data protection, safeguarding and other relevant legislation, including those governing apprenticeships.
- 2.11 All University of Bath staff involved in recruitment, selection or admissions of Student Apprentices should be familiar with the underlying principles described in this statement. This extends to employers responsible for recruitment and selection decisions, and to third party representatives undertaking recruitment activity on behalf of the University or employer.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 The University has one central department with management and oversight of admissions to apprenticeship courses:
 - **Student Recruitment and Admissions** is responsible for recruitment and admission of students to taught degrees and is led by the Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions.
- 3.2 Admissions decisions are undertaken in consultation with the relevant academic department.
- 3.3 The **University Executive Board** is responsible for the setting of targets for entry in accordance with University strategy, approved by Council.
- 3.4 The **Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions**, in conjunction with the Deans of Faculty/School and Heads of Department, is responsible for the implementation of the University strategies for recruitment and admissions and the operation of relevant policy and procedure. They have responsibility for bringing together recruitment and admissions activities in their departments in a shared approach commonly understood by all staff.
- 3.5 **Recruitment teams**, and all those tasked with providing information to prospective employers and Student Apprentices, are responsible for implementing agreed recruitment strategies. They are responsible for ensuring:

- information provided to prospective employers and Student Apprentices for recruitment purposes is accurate by monitoring the provision of information across the University
- staff undertaking recruitment activities are appropriately trained to disseminate advice and guidance in a manner which encourages positive decision making
- agents and other third-party staff are trained appropriately in their capacity representing the University and its interests and that agent arrangements are conducted in accordance with this statement (see para. 5.4)
- recruitment strategies are periodically reviewed and are fit to deliver against objectives.

3.6 **The Widening Access Team** has responsibility for delivering certain recruitment activities specifically designed to encourage students from under-represented groups to join the University. The Head of Widening Access and Participation is responsible for ensuring all such activities and information provided adhere to the principles and practices outlined in this statement.

3.7 **The Department of Marketing & Communications**, and all those tasked with delivering marketing activities to prospective students, has additional responsibilities for sharing information with prospective employers and Student Apprentices, including:

- ensuring that marketing materials are compliant with current legislation and policies on information provision
- providing suitable platforms for publishing course and admissions information
- conducting surveys and evaluation activities to meet requirements laid out in the recruitment strategies, for the purpose of informing and improving the provision of information and recruitment and admissions practices.

3.8 **Admissions teams** (or those responsible for processing applications) are responsible for ensuring fairness and transparency of admissions policies and procedures. This includes:

- providing accurate and transparent entry requirements online and validating this information where it appears in recruitment, marketing, or outreach materials
- assessing applications from Student Apprentices using the admissions and selection processes outlined in Section 6 and in consultation with nominated staff in the relevant academic department. Selection staff within an admissions team will usually have responsibility for a specific set of courses or group of students
- setting expectations and monitoring the speed of selection decisions (with reference to para. 7.2)
- managing the number of offers made and how selection decisions are timed and sequenced to ensure student intakes meet the University's agreed expectations
- ensuring all applicants are provided with material information regarding their chosen course prior to offer and informing applicants of any relevant changes to

this information prior to entry, taking guidance from colleagues in the Faculties/School and the Academic Registry as appropriate

- annually reviewing processes and criteria for each apprenticeship course with academic departments to ensure they are effective and fit for purpose
- providing reports on admissions outcomes to Senate and Council, and relevant data on applications and entrants to Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Degree Apprenticeship Quality and Standards Group as required.

3.9 **Heads of Department/School** are responsible for nominating staff to undertake recruitment and admissions functions within their department:

- Admissions Tutor(s), Business Development staff or nominated Director(s) of Studies have specific responsibilities for assessing admissions for their respective apprenticeship courses. They may also have responsibility for leading or delivering specific, department-focused recruitment activities
- Admissions Tutors, Business Development staff or nominated Director(s) of Studies and those who support them should have the appropriate skills and knowledge to make decisions against agreed criteria and deliver their recruitment activities effectively. They will be expected to engage with training provided by admissions and recruitment teams and the Academic Registry where appropriate
- Departments are responsible for conducting interviews where they are used in selection, supported by admissions teams, where appropriate.

3.10 **Academic Departments** are responsible for overseeing prospective applicant enquiries for their Student Apprentices and relatives, agents and advisors. This includes:

- providing and managing channels for enquiries which enable them to make informed decisions and access application processes effectively
- setting and monitoring response times for enquiries they receive, and enquiries received elsewhere in the University.

3.11 **Academic Registry**, working with academic departments and admissions teams, is responsible for providing advice and guidance on whether a prospective Student Apprentice meets the eligibility criteria set out in Annex A in the ESFA Funding Rules, including any Right to Work requirements. The **Student Immigration Service** works with admissions teams to ensure processes and practices that relate to the University's immigration sponsorship duties are compliant. The Student Immigration Service has ultimate responsibility for the provision of immigration advice to Student Apprentices and their employers.

3.12 **Student Support and Safeguarding** work with recruitment and admissions teams to ensure applicants receive appropriate advice and guidance relating to any disability or long-term health condition and any support available to them when joining the University.

- 3.13 Managers whose staff have responsibility for recruitment or admissions activities should ensure that their staff are aware of the [University Admissions Policy](#), with the appropriate amendments relating to apprenticeship courses, other and related policies (see Section 4), and that they are clear about their responsibilities under those policies.
- 3.14 **Heads of recruitment and admissions teams** are responsible for ensuring their staff at all levels have been provided with suitable training in recruitment and admissions. In addition to training for its own staff, these teams will provide training opportunities for all staff engaged in their areas.

4 Regulations, Policies, Appeals and Complaints

- 4.1 The University maintains a core set of entry requirements set out in the [University's Regulations for Student Apprentices](#) to ensure Student Apprentices joining all apprenticeship courses meet the eligibility criteria and are appropriately qualified to undertake an apprenticeship. All selection decisions must be consistent with these regulations, and the relevant Head of Admissions consulted on a case-by-case basis for guidance on the procedures for any exemption.
- 4.2 The University has separate policies governing specific aspects of recruitment, selection and admissions practices, and policies of particular concern to these practices, including:
- [Guidance on Admissions and Support for Students entering the University Under the Age of 18](#) (in accordance with the [University of Bath Safeguarding Policy](#))
 - [Student Applicant Criminal Convictions Declaration Procedure](#)
 - [Statement of Equality Objectives](#)
 - [Degree Apprenticeship Applicant Privacy Notices](#)
 - [Degree Apprenticeship Offer Terms and Conditions](#)
- 4.3 The University also has an [Access and Participation Plan](#), which may include specific activities and commitments in relation to recruitment and admissions activities.
- 4.4 The University has a detailed [appeals and complaints](#) process for prospective Student Apprentices should they feel any aspect of recruitment, selection or admissions has not been conducted in accordance with University policies and standards. Anyone seeking advice on how to lodge an appeal or complaint can obtain it from the relevant Head of Admissions on request.
- 4.5 Where an individual is in prison, to be eligible for apprenticeship funding they must be eligible for Release on Temporary Licence. It is intended that prisoners will complete part of their training while in custody and part after release into the community. As a minimum, however, no prisoner apprentice may undertake End Point Assessment prior to release.

- 4.6 Military prisoners, immigration detainees and prisoners on remand are ineligible for apprenticeships offered in prisons.

5 Recruitment and Provision of Information to Prospective Student Apprentices

- 5.1 Staff involved in recruitment, selection and admissions will ensure information is available through recognised channels to inform potential applicants of the relevant information regarding the University's offer to enable them to make an informed decision, including:

- details of the application process for an applicant's chosen course
- advice, guidance, support and specific services available to applicants with disabilities, long-term health conditions or additional needs and how to access them, both during the application process and as a Student Apprentice
- advice, guidance and support available to applicants regarding any criminal conviction, caution or warning, or pending investigation, they may have
- information about the funding of an apprenticeship through the apprenticeship levy
- highlighting any unusual or unexpected terms and conditions or aspects of the University's provision which significantly deviates from normal expectations
- ensuring applicants are aware of their responsibility to provide full, accurate and truthful information as part of the admissions process
- information on other key aspects of the University's provision for Student Apprentices, such as health and wellbeing services, careers support and the services of The Students' Union
- where relevant, information regarding course or learner eligibility criteria, including residency and Right to Work
- the University's [Student Protection Plan](#) which outlines the arrangements for ensuring the quality and continuation of education for all undergraduate and taught postgraduate Student Apprentices throughout their studies

Staff must ensure that in all these areas the information provided is applicable to a wide range of audiences, to include prospective employers.

- 5.2 All staff undertaking recruitment activities should be trained to provide information and advice on the topics outlined in (5.1). Training should ensure staff can provide advice within the context of the wider sector, such that Student Apprentices have an informed view on how the provision at Bath relates to other options.
- 5.3 Admissions teams will provide material information on its courses in a durable format for Student Apprentices during the application process, which will be accurate at the time of publication. Where aspects of a course change between application and entry, the admissions team will ensure all affected Student Apprentices and their employers are appropriately informed in a timely manner, and offered guidance on alternative

options a prospective Student Apprentice may wish to consider, if available. In the unlikely event a course is discontinued prior to entry, the admissions team will contact all affected Student Apprentices and their employers and support them in finding suitable alternative courses where possible.

- 5.4 Student Recruitment and Admissions is responsible for ensuring appropriate mechanisms are in place for the recruitment and training of agents or other representatives acting to recruit students to the University on its behalf, and to ensure that any guidance or materials used are accurate and represent the University effectively. The team will ensure appropriate review processes are in place for agent relationships, and that other teams responsible for student recruitment or marketing are appropriately consulted as part of the review.
- 5.5 Student Recruitment and Admissions will negotiate any commission payments and manage such relationships through formal contracts approved by the Director of Student Recruitment & Admissions and the University's Legal Adviser.

6 Selection and Admission

- 6.1 In future, applications for undergraduate apprenticeships will be made through the UCAS admissions service. For all other apprenticeship courses the University will provide an online application process through its website. In all cases, the admissions team (or those tasked with processing applications) will ensure the method of application is clearly communicated on the University's website. Prospective Student Apprentices with additional needs when accessing the application process should contact the relevant Head of Admissions for further guidance, if required.
- 6.2 The University does not charge an application fee or deposit for apprenticeship courses.
- 6.3 Each apprenticeship course has specific entry requirements. These criteria will be designed in keeping with the University's principles on admissions and selection outlined in Section 2. These requirements will also be determined by the requirements and recommendations set out in the relevant apprenticeship standard.
- 6.4 The entry requirements for courses will be set and published as appropriate, mindful of the needs of prospective applicants. Prospective applicants and their employers can contact the relevant academic department for further guidance on their individual requirements and suitability.
- 6.5 Admissions teams are responsible for setting equivalent levels for suitable qualifications not covered by set criteria. Where requirements are not routinely published, prospective applicants can contact the relevant admissions team for further guidance.

- 6.6 Entry requirements on the University's website constitute the institutional record of these requirements. Where information is not published, the relevant admissions team will be responsible for nominating an alternative source. Admissions teams must inform all relevant stakeholders of any changes to entry requirements or qualification equivalences.
- 6.7 The University's [Regulations for Student Apprentices](#) stipulate the minimum English language standards all Student Apprentices are expected to meet prior to entry. Admissions teams are responsible for setting and publishing clear and transparent criteria for how applicants demonstrate they have a suitable standard of English.
- 6.8 Staff within admissions teams and Admissions Tutors (or nominated Directors of Studies) consider applications for each course using agreed criteria and practices. In doing so, they aim to:
- reach decisions which are fair and consistent with published criteria, the evidence provided in a Student Apprentice's application and the University's principles on selection and admission outlined in Section 2
 - apply appropriate judgement and discretion when considering an applicant's eligibility to undertake an apprenticeship and suitability based on the requirements set out in the relevant apprenticeship standard
 - ensure all additional evidence required to offer or confirm a place, to include evidence of eligibility, is collected and appropriately documented.
- 6.9 Every selection decision must be reviewed and verified by a second member of staff before it is released to ensure selection criteria are applied consistently, and to prevent errors.
- 6.10 The University may use interviews as part of the selection process, either for specific courses or for groups of applicants where other methods of selection are inappropriate or insufficient. The University will only require or employ interviews where they form a substantive part of the selection process for a given applicant. Where interviews are used, the University will publish course specific details on who will be interviewed and how interviews will be conducted.
- 6.11 The University reserves the right to interview any applicant where it is warranted by individual circumstances (at the discretion of the relevant Head of Admissions).
- 6.12 Admissions teams will electronically notify all applicants of the decision on their application in a clear and timely way. For successful applicants, this will include:
- any specific academic conditions they will need to meet to secure their place
 - any other conditions that may apply, such as criminal conviction checks
 - the process for accepting an offer
 - other institutional terms and conditions

- 6.13 Where an application is unsuccessful, the admissions team will communicate this to the applicant. This communication may include limited feedback, or advice on alternative courses available if appropriate, but detailed feedback on each application will not be provided routinely. Unsuccessful applicants may contact the relevant admissions team for further feedback.
- 6.14 In line with the principles detailed in Section 2, when making admissions decisions staff should consider additional context of applicants where appropriate and relevant, and where it does not impact their eligibility. This may be achieved through the individual consideration of an application or through systemic processes that use contextual data applied across all applicants. Factors may include:
- an applicant's health and the impact of specific periods of illness on their prior education
 - family and other personal circumstances
 - disruption affecting education providers they previously attended and general performance of students at those providers
 - contextual data indicating an applicant's background, such as their socio-economic background or the rates of participation in higher education in their area.
- 6.15 Where specific processes are in place to consider these factors (such as contextual admissions schemes or processes for requesting consideration of mitigating circumstances) the relevant admissions team will publish guidance online and in any print prospectus on how they are applied so these processes are as transparent as possible.
- 6.16 The University will undertake an Initial Needs Assessment (INA) with a prospective Student Apprentice and their employer to make a final decision on the apprentice's suitability and eligibility for an apprenticeship course. An unconditional offer will only be made when the INA meeting has taken place and mandatory contracts and documents are signed. Eligibility requirements are detailed in Annex A.

7 Review and Monitoring

- 7.1 The University will monitor its recruitment, selection and admissions processes and policies to ensure that they work effectively, are informed by user feedback and are subject to continuous enhancement.
- 7.2 When considering the effectiveness of admissions and enquiry operations, the University balances speed of response against quality admissions practices, quality of service and effective communication, with no one factor being more important.

Statement Details

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Annex A: Course and Learner Eligibility Requirements for Apprenticeships

The University must ensure that both the course and the learner are eligible for funding prior to the Student Apprentice starting their apprenticeship course.

Course Eligibility

To ensure that the apprenticeship course is the most appropriate training course for a prospective Student Apprentice, the University must check:

- all new Student Apprentices will start on an approved apprenticeship standard at the appropriate level
- the individual's job role has a productive purpose and there is a direct link between the selected apprenticeship standard and the individual's job role
- the employer pays a lawful wage for the time the Student Apprentice is in work and in off-the-job training
- the apprenticeship allows the Student Apprentice to acquire substantive new skills and the content of the training is materially different from any prior qualification or a previous apprenticeship (unless training needs to be repeated to meet accreditation requirements for a regulated profession)
- the employer will only use funds from their apprenticeship service account or government-employer co-investment for Student Apprentices employed by them or a connected company or charity as defined by HMRC. This also applies where the Student Apprentice is funded by a transfer of funds from another employer.

Following an Initial Needs Assessment (INA) with the Student Apprentice (and employer where possible*), the apprenticeship must meet the minimum duration (12 months) and the Student Apprentice's Training Plan must include:

- identification of all relevant prior learning and experience, and properly accounted for in the Training Plan
- identification of all learning support requirements (where the Student Apprentice has given their consent for this to be shared with their employer)
- an agreement on and how all parties will work together to achieve the apprenticeship (i.e., the roles and responsibilities of the provider, employer and Student Apprentice)
- the price of the apprenticeship, so it is clear to the employer from the outset how much they will need to contribute (if applicable).

** If the employer is unable to attend this discussion, the provider must give them the opportunity to contribute and send them the relevant information after the meeting for review and signature.*

The employer must agree to:

- provide the Student Apprentice with the appropriate support and supervision to carry out both their job role and their apprenticeship (including the End Point Assessment)

- release the Student Apprentice for off-the-job training as documented in the Training Plan
- provide the Student Apprentice with the opportunity and support to embed and consolidate the knowledge, skills and behaviours, gained through off-the-job training, into the workplace.
- take part / provide input into progress reviews.

Learner Eligibility

The University can only claim funding for a Student Apprentice who meets the eligibility criteria set out in the Apprenticeship Funding Rules. The University must check the eligibility of the Student Apprentice prior to the start of the apprenticeship course, and ensure the Student Apprentice:

- meets the minimum age criteria to be eligible for funding (16 years old)
- has an eligible residency status as set out in Annex A of the Apprenticeship Funding Rules
- has the right to work in England
- can complete the apprenticeship course within the time they have available, including the End Point Assessment. If the Student Apprentice is unable to complete the apprenticeship in the time that they have available because their visa will expire or they have a fixed term contract which is shorter than the duration of the apprenticeship for example, they are ineligible for funding
- is not self-employed as a sole trader or are a shareholder / director with no separate identifiable line manager to undertake the role of 'employer'
- does not benefit from funding for any part of their apprenticeship that duplicates training or assessment they have received from any other source
- spends at least 50% of their working hours in England over the duration of the apprenticeship (this must be regular, planned and known at the start of the course)
- has not moved from a full-time, further education or higher education course and that course has been funded by a student loan. Where a Student Apprentice has a student loan, the loan must be terminated by the individual and the provider must be satisfied that this has occurred
- is not undertaking another apprenticeship with less than four weeks to completion, or any other DfE funded FE/HE course, or training funded through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) (where the training will replicate vocational and other learning aims covered by the apprenticeship, including English and maths, or offer career related training that conflicts with the apprenticeship aims)