

Admissions Policy

Scope of Policy

This policy covers entry to University of Essex Online (UoEO) courses delivered by Kaplan Open Learning. It covers all stages of an applicant's interaction with the UoEO from initial enquiry through application and receipt of the selection decision.

We are committed to fair access and encourage applications from all students who are able to demonstrate the potential to meet the entry criteria for the relevant course.

Principles Governing Admissions

We believe that a diverse community forms an essential part of our core values and that diversity amongst our student body enriches learning, teaching and the overall student experience.

Our courses combine the advantages of a traditional classroom environment with the flexibility of distance learning. They are part-time and delivered entirely online and thus ideally suited to the needs of working adults and those who cannot or do not want to study full-time at a traditional campus-based university.

This policy sets out the means by which we encourage and welcome applicants from different backgrounds. We are committed to ensuring that every student who has the potential to succeed on our programmes has the opportunity to apply. All applicants will be considered and evaluated on the basis of their past achievements and academic potential. Our admissions policies and procedures are designed to ensure that all applicants are considered fairly and consistently and in accordance with professional standards. We acknowledge the principles governing good admissions practice set out in Section B2 of the Quality Assurance Agency Code of Practice¹.

We also strive to observe the good practice guidance provided by SPA² and to comply with all relevant legislation in relation to admissions activity.

We are committed to equality of opportunity and to a pro-active and inclusive approach to equality to ensure that admission to our courses is determined only by personal merit. Our Equal Opportunities Policy sets out how we safeguard the equality for our students and our staff.

Monitoring and review of the Admissions Policy is undertaken by the Academic Board and Senior Management Team.

¹ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/quality-code-B2.pdf>

² Supporting Professionalism in Admissions <http://www.spa.ac.uk>



Admissions Policy

Entry Requirements

We have flexible entry requirements that look at both academic and work-based experience. The specific entry requirements for each individual programme are outlined in the 'Entry requirements' section on the relevant programme information page on our website (online.essex.ac.uk).

We offer the following entry routes:

1. Academic Entry Route

In order to satisfy the Academic Entry Route requirements for our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, applicants must meet the academic qualification criteria detailed in the 'Entry requirements' section on our website and be able to provide evidence of their academic achievement at the point of application.

2. Work Experience Entry Route

We recognise that candidates can gain skills in a wide variety of ways and that prior academic performance is not the only indicator of an applicant's ability. Therefore, if applicants do not meet the Academic Entry Route requirements, they may still be eligible to enrol via the Work Experience Route.

In order to satisfy the Work Experience Entry Route requirements for our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, applicants must meet the criteria detailed in the 'Entry requirements' section on our website and be able to provide evidence of their academic achievement and work experience at the point of application.

3. Open Entry Route

This entry route only applies to Certificate of Continuing Education (CertCE) programmes at undergraduate level. We believe that education should be accessible to everyone, so applicants do not need any previous academic qualifications or work experience to apply for a CertCE programme.

English Language Competence

Applicants whose first language is not English and who have not been educated in an English-speaking environment (country and/or institution) are required to achieve a minimum overall score of IELTS (Academic) 6.0 or equivalent (undergraduate) or 6.5 or equivalent (postgraduate) to be admitted to our programmes. A range of English language qualifications are accepted as being equivalent to IELTS.

If applicants do not hold an IELTS or equivalent qualification, we require them to complete the Kaplan International Test of English (KITE). KITE is online assessment which is adaptive based on the answers provided. Students must score a minimum of B2 for undergraduate and C1 for postgraduate courses prior to being offered a place on one of our programmes.

21 Day Money Back Guarantee

We recognise that starting, or returning to higher education, especially online study can be daunting and challenging, therefore we offer a 21-day money back guarantee period. Within this period all students participate in an online discussion and are required to submit a written assignment. The assignment is reviewed by the academic team to help identify students who may not be suitable to progress onto the programme following the 21-day money back guarantee period or who may need additional support at the start of their studies.



Admissions Policy

Students who do not pass the written assignment at the first attempt will be offered a second attempt at the next intake. The student will be provided with advice and guidance about how to address any issues and improve their written assignment.

Additionally, students may decide that this mode of study is not right for them and may withdraw within the 21 days. Students who decide not to continue, or who do not pass the written assignment will receive a full refund within 14 working days.

Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning and Professional Exemptions

Applicants who believe they may be eligible for Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) or professional exemptions will be given the opportunity to have this assessed and accredited towards a relevant programme:

- Applicants who have completed modules at Levels 4 and 5 are able to apply for APCL for relevant individual modules.
- Applicants who have completed relevant qualifications equivalent to 240 credits (120 credits at Levels 4 and 120 credits at level 5) are able to apply for direct entry onto our Level 6 top-up programmes leading to a full Bachelors' degree.
- Applicants who have a professional qualification in a relevant subject are able to apply for up to 60 credits of module exemptions on our Masters programmes (excluding MBA).

All applications are considered on a case by case basis and should be made before the applicant commences study on the programme into which they are wanting to enrol onto. Please refer to our [Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning Policy](#) for further details.

The Admissions Process

Each applicant will be allocated a dedicated Admissions Adviser who will be their principal contact and will guide them through the admissions process:

1. Quality evaluation

All applications are subject to a quality evaluation by an Admissions Adviser. This ensures that the application form has been fully completed and that the following information and documentation has been provided as a minimum:

- Copy of photo ID
- CV
- Personal Statement (minimum 300 words)

On completion of this evaluation, the application is classed as a 'Qualified Application'.

The following additional evidence may also be requested to support the application:

- Copies of prior educational certificates
- Reference(s)
- IELTS or equivalent English language certificate



Admissions Policy

2. Academic approval

In accordance with our commitment to fair admissions, each 'Qualified Application' is considered individually by an appropriate member of the Academic Team, who will determine whether an offer should be made on the basis of academic achievements to date, or other evidence of the applicant's ability and potential to complete the course for which he/she has applied.

3. Successful applicants

Where we decide to make an offer, this will be communicated to the student directly by their allocated Admissions Adviser. The Admissions Adviser will also explain any conditions that may be attached to the offer and arrange a pre-enrolment call with the applicant to provide advice and guidance in relation to the course.

4. Unsuccessful applicants

Where we decide that an offer cannot be made, the Admissions Adviser will contact the applicant explaining the reasons for the decision. Where possible, the Admissions Adviser will offer guidance as to what alternative qualifications or experience an applicant would need to gain in order to pursue their chosen path of study.

5. Re-admission of withdrawn students

Students who previously left a course voluntarily or who were required to withdraw without obtaining an award and now wish to reapply will be considered in accordance with our [Re-admission Policy](#).

6. Discontinuation or suspension of courses

We reserve the right to discontinue or suspend a course for which offers have already been issued but undertake to do this in exceptional circumstances only. Where a course is discontinued, applicants holding offers will be informed as soon as possible, and where possible and appropriate, will be offered a place on an alternative programme delivered by us.

7. Applicants with disabilities

Applicants who declare a disability will be provided with advice and guidance on the level of support that we can provide and on any funding that may be available.

Responsibility of applicants in the application process

Applicants are expected to:

- Provide full, accurate and honest information with respect to their application.
- Communicate any changes to the information originally supplied in their application as soon as possible.
- Respond in a timely manner to requests for further information from us.

Any application found to contain false or misleading information will be rejected and no further applications from these candidates will be considered.

We reserve the right to withdraw or amend any offer in light of additional information which may come to light after the original decision has been made.



Admissions Policy

Complaints

Where an applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their application, we encourage them to let us know as soon as possible to allow us to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

A complaint does not necessarily have to be regarding an unsuccessful application but may be in connection with any aspect of the admissions process or any belief that a procedure has not been properly followed.

It is possible that we may not be able to resolve the matter informally, and in these cases the applicant may initiate a formal complaint. Further details of how to raise a formal complaint can be found in the [Complaints Policy](#)

Data Protection and Communication with Third Parties

We operate in compliance with data protection legislation and good records management practice. Applicants' data is treated as confidential by all staff involved in the admissions process and is not divulged unnecessarily or inappropriately.

Data may be shared with our University partner, Government agencies and, if appropriate, our recruitment agents. In accordance with University policy, staff involved in the admissions process communicate only with applicants themselves, unless the applicant has given express permission for a third party to communicate on his/her behalf. Third parties may be parents, teachers, advisers or agents acting on behalf of applicants.

Registration and Induction

We provide an academic and pastoral induction period to support the transition of applicants to registered students at the end of the admissions process. The Head of Student Support will allocate a dedicated Student Adviser to each enrolled student who will be the main point of contact throughout their studies with us.

The Student Adviser will conduct an initial Welcome Call to introduce themselves and explain the induction process which includes a Welcome Week designed to introduce students to the learning platform and online resources that will be available to them. This will normally also include information on general study skills, access to online libraries and good academic practice, such as effective referencing and advice on how to avoid plagiarism.