

Loughborough College Higher Education Admissions Policy

1. Purpose and scope

This document provides the basis for admissions practice for the Higher Education Department at Loughborough College (*the college*). It describes the aims, principles and processes followed by the college to select and admit new students to undergraduate programmes including Higher National Certificate/Diploma, Foundation Degree and BA/BSc (Hons) (*referred to as undergraduate programmes*).

2. Principles and aims

i) This policy outlines Loughborough College's position on key matters relating to recruitment and admission of students to Undergraduate programmes. Procedures should be seen in the context of supporting the institution's goals and ambitions as set out in the College's strategic plan.

ii) The principal aim of the policy is to ensure recruitment and admission practices are fair, explicit, and implemented consistently to support equality of opportunity. The college welcomes applications from candidates from all ages, and from all backgrounds. We recognise that student potential is not always evident simply through formal academic qualifications and we particularly welcome applications from those who are currently under-represented within higher education. The college is committed to diversity in the student population and will make available a range of measures by which applicants may demonstrate their readiness and commitment to study in higher education. As such, this document has been informed by the College's policies on equal opportunities and widening participation as well as relevant good practice guidance.

iii) The college is committed to ensuring equity of opportunity for all our students. No potential student will be excluded from entry to any undergraduate programme as a result of discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment, sex, age, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, disability, nationality, ethnicity, race, religion or belief, or pregnancy or maternity status.

iv) The College is committed to the delivery of an efficient and professional admissions service to all applicants. The college will be open and accessible in its requirements and selection processes. Each applicant will be entitled to a prompt and professional assessment of their application against clearly available criteria, and complaints and appeals will be handled in an independent process.

3. Terms and Conditions

This Policy sits alongside and should be read in conjunction with the Terms and Conditions of Study (The Student Contract) found here:

<http://docs.loucoll.ac.uk/Publication%20Scheme/5.%20Policy%20Documents/HE-P003%20Student%20Contract%202017-18.pdf> which forms the contract between applicants, students and the college.

4. Roles and responsibilities

In order to provide a high quality and effective recruitment, selection and admission process in accordance with this policy, the college fosters a collaborative working approach between its

academic departments and the Undergraduate Student Registry; inclusive of the Undergraduate Admissions Officer, along with other Professional Services in the college.

4.1 Academic departments (or awarding body/ validating institution where applicable) in liaison with the Head of Higher Education and Student Registry are responsible for determining entry criteria and the processes for evaluation of applications for each of their associated courses. In liaison with the Student Registry, they are responsible for assisting in the assessment of applications, conducting interviews (where applicable), hosting visit/open days, providing up-to-date course information for enquirers and applicants and provide support and guidance to the Student Registry.

4.2 The Undergraduate Student Registry have overall responsibility for managing the admissions process and procedures; providing advice and support to enquirers and applicants; assessing applications and making offers on behalf of academic Schools; processing decisions on applications; assessing tuition fee status; delivering training, and developing and managing effective systems and management information for the recruitment and admissions process.

The college's undergraduate admissions process is governed by the Higher Education Admissions Policy and associated policies and documents. The respective elements of the Policy represent the college's regulatory framework for admissions practice.

5. Admissions criteria

Minimum entry requirements for undergraduate degree programmes are quoted in UCAS tariff points and are notified in the college prospectus and website, course literature and on the UCAS website. Other qualifications such as GCSE/ Specific A-Levels may be included or excluded on a subject by subject basis. Entry offers are normally made on a tariff point basis and cannot be met by AS examinations alone for undergraduate degree programmes, other levels of study below this may have exemptions. Individual programmes reserve the right to judge the relevance and acceptability of any qualification or individual subject when considering an application.

Teaching, assessment and student support will take place in English. The college must therefore be confident that the applicant has proficiency in the English language necessary to succeed in their chosen programme. Therefore applicants may be required to take an English language test or provide suitable evidence to support this requirement as part of the condition of an offer.

All applicants will be required to present original certification of their qualifications upon request. Applicants who fail to do this may have their applications terminated. The college also reserves the right to request further information in relation to an application either directly from an applicant or from a former place of education or referee whose details have been provided by the applicant.

6. Course information

We are committed to providing clear, comprehensive and accurate information on our courses and entry requirements which is accessible to all enquirers and applicants. Detailed information is published in our Undergraduate Prospectuses and on our website to enable prospective students to make informed choices and decisions.

We welcome applications from students studying a wide range of UK, European and international qualifications that offer effective preparation for study. Further information about both general and course specific entry requirements can be found at: www.loucoll.ac.uk/undergraduate-study

6.1 Costs and fees

Information about the financing of programmes at the college is available on our website, as well as being included in our prospectus. International students sponsored on Tier 4 visas must meet UK Visa and Immigration financial requirements which include course fees and maintenance. Full details can be found on the UK Border Agency website.

7. Assessment and selection

7.1 General

When making admissions decisions the college considers an applicant's academic ability and potential to succeed on the chosen course. This may be evidenced by a range of factors, including:

- Achieved or predicted academic/professional qualifications and grades
- Qualifications in the use of the English language
- Own statements of interest in the course provided in a personal statement
- Potential to perform well as evidenced by references (usually academic, but also professional where relevant to the proposed course)
- Relevant work or other professional experience
- Where appropriate, an interview or a portfolio or sample of the applicants' work
- Contextual data (see 7.2)

7.2 Contextual information

Loughborough College is committed to widening access to Higher Education. We encourage applications from all students with the potential to succeed, regardless of their background, and seek to ensure that no groups are disadvantaged during the application process. To support our mission, the college makes use of contextual data in the undergraduate admissions process. This helps to identify applicants with the greatest potential to succeed in higher education and so that particular groups of applicants are not disadvantaged during the application process. We may therefore consider contextual information in our offer making process based on the following:

- **Currently lives in an area of low participation to Higher Education (POLAR4, Quintile 1):**
This data is downloaded from a publicly available dataset and mapped to the home postcode indicated in an applicant's UCAS application.
- **Has spent more than three months in care:** This information is taken from an applicant's declaration as part of their UCAS application.
- **Has a disability or long-term health condition:** This information is taken from an applicant's declaration as part of their UCAS application.
- **Where an applicant will be aged 21 or over at the start of the course (defined as mature):**
These applicants may require additional consideration on the basis of a period spent away from education, personal circumstances and/or additional work or life experience. This information is taken from an applicant's declaration as part of their UCAS application.

- **Other:** Any personal or extenuating circumstances not covered by the above that may have had a negative impact on an applicant's studies. For example, having caring responsibilities within the home or significant disruption to education. This information is taken from either an applicant's personal statement and/or reference as part of their UCAS application.

7.3 Elite athletes

Loughborough College is recognised as a leading sports college and therefore attracts a high percentage of elite athletes to its programmes. The college recognises that students who excel in non-academic areas such as sport can make a specific additional contribution to the college. We may, therefore, for exceptional applicants with elite sporting backgrounds (or similar), take into account non-academic excellence in our offer-making process based on some of the following:

- The achievements of the applicant academically and in sport (or other non-academic)
- The applicant's potential for future success both academically and in sport
- The applicant's personal statement and reference on his/her application
- The applicant's capacity for balancing academic and sporting (or other non-academic) requirements
- The college's capacity to assist the applicant, once admitted, in meeting both academic and sporting (or other non-academic) demands
- Additional information (including the views of the appropriate National Governing Body, if approached by the college) and/or performance at interview

7.4 Special entry routes

The college may develop specific entry opportunities in partnership with schools or colleges at home or abroad with the intention of supporting the college's commitment to widening participation in higher education within the UK and increasing the number of international students within the college.

8. Applications

8.1 How and when to apply

Full-Time Undergraduate applications must be submitted via UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service: www.ucas.com) and the college will observe the UCAS procedures and deadlines with regard to undergraduate applications. There are a small number of part-time courses that need to apply directly to the college (information can be found on our website/prospectus).

International students should apply directly to the college using the appropriate form. More information can be found here: <https://international.loucoll.ac.uk/> .

Applicants should be aware that there is competition for places on popular courses. As a result, we may close courses to new applications during the admissions cycle if we believe courses to be full. For undergraduate courses, any closure will always be after the main UCAS scheme deadline of 15 January for entry in the following academic year.

8.2 Interviews and selection events

For the majority of programmes, the college does not require applicants to be interviewed or undertake a selection event as part of its recruitment process. However, for some part-time courses and in some individual cases, applicants will be interviewed if it is felt that this is the best method of identifying potential for study or a requirement by the validating institution/awarding body.

8.3 Offer

Any offer of entry will be outlined in a formal offer communication from the college together with the College's Undergraduate Student Contract (and additionally for undergraduate applicants on UCAS Track).

8.3.1 Types of offer

Offers made are:

- i) Conditional- this offer will require the applicant to achieve certain qualifications or meet specified non-academic conditions before entry is granted.
- ii) Unconditional- this will not require any academic conditions to be met, but may require other non-academic conditions to be met before entry is granted. Unconditional offers will be made where students have already achieved the college's minimum academic entry requirements. In exceptional circumstances the college may choose to waive the minimum requirements and make (an) unconditional offer(s) to applicant(s) in line with the assessment and selection criteria, where it is deemed to be in the applicant's best interest.

8.3.2 Change of offer

Occasionally, the college may decide that it is unable to offer admission to the original course to which an applicant has applied, but is able to make an offer for an alternative course. In this situation the college will contact the applicant to confirm that the offer has been made for the alternative course.

8.4 Replying to an offer

The college offer communication will provide details of how to accept our offer. When doing so, an applicant agrees to abide by the college's Terms and Conditions of Study outlined in the Student Contract.

If an applicant fulfils the conditions of their offer, or if the college exercises its discretion to accept an applicant on the basis of satisfactory academic performance or other contextualised reasons, their place at the college will be confirmed.

8.5 Unsuccessful applicants and feedback

The college reserves the right to refuse admission to applicants who have not met academic or non-academic entry requirements; where there is evidence that they are unable to meet the academic, professional or vocational requirements of the course, or where there is a cap on recruitment numbers. International students (who will be required to apply for a Tier 4 visa) may be rejected if they fail to meet UK Visa and Immigration statutory requirements; or where to make an offer would contravene UK Visa and Immigration Tier 4 Policy Guidance.

The college is committed to providing feedback on request to applicants who have not been offered a place. Feedback is provided to enable applicants to reflect on their progress through the application process but does not constitute a reconsideration of an application or a challenge to the college's decision on an application. Applicants requesting feedback are asked to do so promptly and must contact Undergraduate Admissions in writing (by email or letter) within 28 days of the decision being made. The college aims to respond to requests for feedback within 20 working days of receipt, unless otherwise indicated. Feedback on specific applicants will not be provided to any third party.

If an applicant is subsequently dissatisfied with the feedback received, they may wish to request a formal review of the decision or make a complaint (see section 13)

8.6 International students

Those applicants offering overseas qualifications will be expected to have achieved the equivalent of the quoted minimum entrance requirements for their programme to enrol. Where qualifications are presented in a language other than English, an official translation may be requested at the applicant's expense. International applicants must be proficient in English in order to be admitted directly onto a course. The college's requirements for accepted levels of English language are available on request from the International Office on 01509 618045 or email international@loucoll.ac.uk

8.7 Applicants with a disability or long term health condition

The college has a long tradition of working to provide an inclusive and accessible environment that welcomes, nurtures and supports students to reach their full potential. Suitability for study will be considered against the same criteria as all other candidates following the process outlined in Section 6 of this policy.

Applicants are encouraged to seek advice on the suitability of the course, college accommodation and other matters prior to making an application and are also advised to declare additional requirements on their application form. If an offer is made, the appropriate college department will contact an applicant to discuss support needs and plan for any reasonable adjustments the applicant is likely to require. In the unlikely event that, despite reasonable adjustments, an applicant is unable to access his or her chosen course, the college undertakes to offer the applicant support in submitting an alternative application.

8.8 Extenuating circumstances

It is the applicant's responsibility to inform the college of any extenuating circumstances that may lead, or have led to, academic performance that is not truly indicative of their true potential. We recommend that information on extenuating circumstances that have affected or are likely to affect academic performance be included in the referee's statement. Extenuating circumstances should be brought to the attention of the admissions team before examination results are released.

We would usually expect circumstances affecting assessment to have been taken up with the relevant examination body in the first instance and the college may require written confirmation that an examination board/ awarding body has not already made reasonable adjustment to an applicant's results, where making further adjustment in the admissions process might lead to an

applicant having an unfair advantage over other applicants. All relevant cases will be considered as part of the decision-making process and the college reserves the right to request further information from any applicant submitting extenuating circumstances, but cannot usually take into account information that is supplied after an adverse decision has been made on an application. If deemed necessary, and with the applicant's permission, the applicant's academic institution, examination body, doctor or other appropriate third party may be contacted.

8.9 Criminal convictions

Having a criminal conviction will not normally prevent an individual from studying at Loughborough College. However, as part of our duty of care to the college community, Applicants and Prospective Students may be asked to declare unspent criminal convictions for particular types of offences in circumstances where there is a legal ground to ask for such a declaration. This is to enable the college to assess and appropriately manage the risk linked to admission.

8.10 Deferred applications

The College will consider all requests from students to defer their application or offer of a place for one year after an application has been submitted. The college allows students applying for undergraduate programmes to defer their application twice before asking the student to re-apply, whereby their application will be considered along with the new cohort of applicants.

A deferral can only be considered if it is made in writing (email or letter); verbal requests must be followed up in writing before they will be implemented. If an applicant applies for deferred entry and then wishes to bring their entry forward to the current academic cycle, such requests should also be put in writing (by email) and a decision will be made dependent on places still available on the given course.

8.11 Re-admission of students

The college will not normally allow re-admission for students who have had their studies terminated where the applications is made within 24 months of the date of the termination decision, or period specified whichever is the longer. Re-admission of students will not be considered where validating/awarding body regulations do not permit.

Where a re-admission is requested within the 24 month period, further consideration will not be given to the application unless suitable evidence is provided indicating an appropriate level of change and/or development since the termination. An interview to determine suitability for re-entry must take place before an offer for re-entry within the 24 month period is made.

Applications from students who have previously withdrawn themselves from the college and are seeking admission to the same course previously studied, will require the approval of the relevant curriculum area (and where applicable validating/ awarding body) before the applicant may be offered a place. Applicants who fail to declare their previous attendance at Loughborough College and/or who fall into any of the above categories may have their applications withdrawn.

Applications from students who have a debt to the college will require the approval of the college's finance department before the applicant may be offered a place.

8.12 Previous education

Students should give details of all previous education, including any previous study in higher education, even if this was not successfully completed. This requirement also applies to applicants who have previously studied at Loughborough College. Applicants should give the reason for any unsuccessful outcomes (e.g. academic failure, decision to withdraw, required to leave for disciplinary reasons, financial problems etc.).

Each application will be considered on its merits and future potential to succeed will be taken into account. Failure to disclose all relevant information may lead to action under 7.12.

8.12.1 Entry with advanced standing

The college makes provision for entry to some of its programmes of study with advanced standing on the basis of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), which can be either experiential or learning credit based. Only results obtained whilst studying at Loughborough College will be used to calculate final classification.

8.13 Fraud, omission and plagiarism

The college reserves the right to withdraw any offer made on the basis of an application which has been found to contain fraudulent information, non-disclosure of information relevant to the application, or is plagiarised. Enrolments based on fraudulent applications will be covered by the college learner disciplinary policy and procedure or HE student contract, which may lead to the withdrawal from a programme of study.

9. Applicants requiring a visa to study in the UK

Students wishing to enter the UK must comply with the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) Points-based Immigration System. Further information is available at: www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa.

The college is committed to meeting its requirements as a sponsor of Tier 4 students, and should an applicant be found not to be in a position to meet all UK visa requirements for the anticipated full duration of his/her programme of study, the college reserves the right to refuse to sponsor the applicant under Tier 4.

In the event of changes to immigration legislation, or if information becomes available that might impact our ability to sponsor a student, the college reserves the right to refuse to sponsor an applicant and/or amend or withdraw any sponsorship already made.

As part of the college's UKVI Tier 4 Sponsor License, the college is required to view and maintain copies of the passport and visa (valid for study at Loughborough College) for all international students. We may also check original qualification documents (including certified translations if these are not in English) on the basis of which admission was granted to the college. The college undertakes these checks as part of the registration process upon arrival.

10. Withdrawal/ Amendments to courses/programmes

While the college endeavours to ensure all programmes run as advertised, there may be a need to discontinue a course with varying degrees of notice. It will however seek to minimise the level of disruption that such actions will cause, and where possible offer a suitable alternative course.

Whilst we try to ensure that all of our courses run as advertised in our prospectuses it is sometimes necessary for us to make significant changes to the structure of our courses. The college will inform applicants of major changes to programmes which occur after the application round begins and will advise applicants of possible courses of action should they be dissatisfied with the intended change.

11. Financial information

11.1 Tuition fees and finance

Information about the financing of undergraduate programmes at the college is available on our website as well as our prospectus.

Where a third party is providing financial support, the college requires applicants to provide written evidence of this.

11.2 Fees assessment

All applicants are required to indicate their nationality, country of birth and country of permanent residence as part of their application. In most cases the provisional residential category indicated on the application form will enable the college to make a decision on the fee status of an applicant. Applicants can be assessed as eligible to pay either Home tuition fees, or overseas tuition fees (where applicable).

If the college considers an applicant's fee status to be unclear from the information provided in their application, Admissions will write to the applicant to ask for further information. This process will normally take place before the applicant has been academically assessed. The college reserves the right to identify an applicant as eligible to pay overseas tuition fees at any point in the admissions process up to the point of enrolment. Applicants whose fee status is in question will be defaulted to overseas until the outcome of the assessment is confirmed, at which point the relevant outcome will be recorded. Disputed fee status decisions will be considered under the college's complaints procedure.

12. Retention and disclosure of admissions information

The data submitted as part of each application is used to assess the suitability of an applicant for study at the college. Anonymised data is also used by the college for statistical and reporting purposes. Application data forms part of the student record for applicants who are admitted to the college.

The college is mindful of the requirements of the Data Protection Act (1998) in handling admissions. Information on the college's practice in respect of retention or disclosure of information concerning admissions is set out in our privacy policy:

<https://www.loucoll.ac.uk/documents-and-policies>

13. Complaints procedure

The college is committed to upholding the principles of fairness and transparency within its admissions process. However, we acknowledge that occasionally applicants may have reason to question or express an opinion about the college's decision, or the way in which their application has been handled. Our complaints procedure can be found: <https://www.loucoll.ac.uk/documents-and-policies>