



University Centre
St Helens

Student Admissions Policy

Purpose

This policy sets out University Centre St Helens' aims for the recruitment and admission of students. It also describes the principles and processes which are used to select and admit new students to professional, undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

University Centre St Helens is committed to providing access to all higher education and professional courses through continued collaboration with employers and university partners; developing new provision, mapped to local needs and regional priorities in flexible delivery methods, fully recognising prior learning, motivation, commitment and life experiences as part of our selection and admissions criteria.

Scope

All applicants to University Centre St Helens

Responsibility/Monitoring

This policy is the responsibility of the Director of Marketing Sales & and Customer Relations.

The policy is monitored and reviewed by the University Centre annually, taking into account relevant policy changes from the Office for Students and relevant legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulation 2018, Equality Act 2010, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Human Rights Act 1998.

Background

This policy takes into account the sector guidelines contained within the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Part B: Assuring and enhancing academic quality, Chapter B2: recruitment, selection and admission to higher education; the principles from the Schwartz review of Higher Education admissions (2004) and the work of Supporting Professionalism in Admissions.

Policy Statement

University Centre St Helens' recruitment and admissions policy is designed to support the Mission, and strategic aims and objectives of St Helens College's Strategic Plan and University Centre St Helens' Higher Education Strategy.

University Centre St Helens operates as policy of responsible recruitment, setting and applying appropriate admissions criteria, and ensuring promotional material clearly reflects this.

The College has a long-established practice for admission to HE programmes. All applications are received centrally and logged by the HE Admissions team. Applications are then forwarded to the relevant HE programme teams. All applicants are considered on their individual merits. Programme teams invite appropriate applicants for interview following which, offers can be made. Applications for full-time places are managed through UCAS and for part-time places through the University Centre St Helens application process.

This practice is in line with the recommendations and good practice guidelines provided by the Supporting Professionalism in Admissions (SPA) programme, details of which can be found at www.spa.ac.uk

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1. University Centre St Helens' recruitment and admissions aims

Our goal is to produce graduates who demonstrate excellence, professionalism and distinctiveness in their chosen field.

We aim to recruit students who demonstrate high academic and intellectual ability with the potential and motivation to succeed on our courses. We recruit students that exhibit a desire to fully engage with, and benefit from studying at University Centre St Helens.

We aim to create a student community that is balanced and diverse in terms of culture, experience and background. Our strategy for widening participation and ensuring fair access is outlined in our Widening Participation Plan, which is available upon request.

We recruit students by:

- providing clear and transparent admissions information to prospective applicants
- operating a fair and effective admissions process
- ensuring the consistent application of policy across the admissions process
- encouraging applications from the widest range of educational, social and cultural backgrounds.

We are committed to providing a fair, effective and professional admissions service which is consistent with good practice as defined in the Quality Assurance Agency's Code of Practice on Admissions to Higher Education.

2. Responsibility for admissions activities

Academic departments and the admissions team work together to provide an effective admissions service.

The Academic departments, senior leadership team and the Governing body has responsibility for determining and managing the Student Admissions Policy and procedures.

Providing advice and support to enquirers and applicants, assessing applications and making offers is the responsibility of the admissions team, the recruitment and outreach team, academic teams and programme leaders.

The admissions team has responsibility for developing and managing effective administrative and communications systems and procedures for managing the admissions process.

Academic departments are responsible for determining entry requirements and assessment processes for each of their courses; assessing applications and making offers; and providing detailed and up-to-date course information for enquirers and applicants, and the marketing department and outreach team.

3. Information for enquirers and applicants

University Centre St Helens is committed to providing accurate admissions and course information which is clear, comprehensive and easily accessible for enquirers and applicants.

Admissions and course information, including detailed information about entry requirements and how we assess applicants, is published in our undergraduate print prospectus and on our website at: www.sthelens.ac.uk/ucsh

We aim to provide accurate and up-to-date information in all of our publications, but – as the print prospectus is published more than 12 months before the beginning of a course – applicants should always refer to our website for the most up to date admissions and course information.

4. Entry requirements

University Centre St Helens welcomes applications from students who can demonstrate that they are able to benefit from the course they have chosen to study and from the learning, research and social environment which University Centre St Helens provides.

To ensure that all applicants are prepared for their studies, each course has an academic entry requirement which applicants will need to fulfil. The entry requirements for each course can be found in our undergraduate print prospectus and on our website at: www.sthelens.ac.uk/ucsh

We welcome applications from UK and EU students who are studying a wide range of UK and European qualifications, that offer effective preparation for study at University Centre St Helens. Non EU/EEA/Swiss nationals, may need to apply for a Tier 4 visa in order to enter and study in the UK. However, University Centre St Helens does not hold a Tier 4 Sponsor Licence to support student visa applications.

In addition to academic entry requirements, University Centre St Helens requires all students to show that their English language is at a level which allows them to successfully complete their chosen course of study.

There are also non-academic additional requirements for applicants to health, health-related, social work and teaching courses. Applicants to these courses are advised to read the specific course information. Further information is also available in the Safeguarding policy (section 11) [http://www.sthelens.ac.uk/images/college-information/equality-and-diversity/SHC Equality and Diversity Policy Statement.pdf](http://www.sthelens.ac.uk/images/college-information/equality-and-diversity/SHC_Equality_and_Diversity_Policy_Statement.pdf)

5. Assessing applicants

University Centre St Helens looks for motivated students with the necessary academic preparation, as detailed in the entry requirements for each course, who will benefit from our learning and research environments.

We are keen to ensure that all applicants are provided with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills, potential and achievements. University Centre St Helens methods of assessment are fair and valid, applied consistently for each course and are regularly reviewed.

The fairness and consistency of offer making for each course is managed by the academic departments and monitored by the Director of Marketing, Sales and Customer Relations.

Each applicant is assessed on an individual basis, with academic discretion used in assessing the range of evidence presented by applicants. In assessing the academic suitability and potential of applicants, we consider the following information:

- achievement in awarded qualifications
- predicted achievement in qualifications which are being studied
- personal or supporting statement, for evidence of motivation and commitment to the subject area(s) and the reasons for wanting to study at University Centre St Helens
- references, for confirmation of academic potential and personal qualities

Programme Leaders and interviewing tutors also draw on a variety of additional methods to assess the suitability of applicants including:

- interview
- portfolio of work
- Auditions

Information about departmental selection procedures is available in the prospectus, on UCAS and on the website.

6. Applying

6.1 How and when to apply

Applications for **undergraduate** courses are submitted via UCAS. Detailed information on how and when to apply can be found at: <http://www.sthelens.ac.uk/ucsh/application-guidance> or www.ucas.com

6.2 Time taken to consider an application

University Centre St Helens aims to consider applications and make decisions as quickly as possible. However, given the volume, range and quality of applications we receive, we are not always able to make an admissions decision immediately. Where we are not able to make a decision for some time, we will contact applicants to explain the situation and let them know when they should expect a decision.

6.3 Communicating with applicants

University Centre St Helens recognises the importance of keeping applicants informed and aims to provide effective updates at key points during the admissions process. University Centre St Helens normally communicates by email and post with applicants.

We send a range of communications to applicants which include the following:

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Director of Marketing, Sales & Customer Relations

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- Acknowledgment of the receipt of an application
- Invitation to interview
- Confirmation that a decision has been made on the application
- Confirmation of the offer of entry and the terms and conditions for offer holders
- Confirmation of meeting the terms of any offer of entry
- Introductory and registration information

In addition to the above, applicants receive communications from the Marketing department, which may include an invitation to visit University Centre St Helens and potentially, other course-specific information.

6.4 Offers of entry

Successful applicants will receive an offer of entry from University Centre St Helens. The offer of entry will either be Conditional on the basis of qualifications or requirements yet to be completed or Unconditional. Any applicant receiving an offer will also receive University Centre St Helens Terms and Conditions, in a durable format. These provide further information about the commitments an applicant makes when accepting an offer of entry.

These can be found at:

http://www.sthelens.ac.uk/images/departments/ucsh/documents/UCSH_Accompanying_Information_and_Conditions_of_Offer_2020_2021_Entry_1.pdf

6.5 Feedback & Right to Appeal

We feel it is important that unsuccessful applicants have the opportunity to receive feedback on their application. University Centre St Helens can provide feedback on request to unsuccessful applicants.

Feedback can be requested by email or letter by contacting the Admissions Team. We aim to respond to requests for feedback within 15 working days of receipt of the request.

We will provide feedback in writing by letter or email. Following feedback, if applicants believe that they have grounds for a formal review of the admissions decision, they should consult the Formal Complaints and Appeals Policy which can be found on the website

http://www.sthelens.ac.uk/images/college-information/public-information/SK_College_Group_Complaint_Procedure_-_Sept_2019.pdf

6.6 Applicants with additional support needs

University Centre St Helens welcomes applications from students with disabilities. Applications from students with disabilities are assessed following standard procedures and consideration of support requirements will remain entirely separate.

If an offer is made, an assessment of needs is carried out to ensure that University Centre St Helens can provide the required support. In the unlikely event that the adjustments needed to provide the required support could not be considered reasonable, University Centre St Helens undertakes to offer the applicant support in submitting an alternative application.

Further information about disability and learning support can be found at:

<http://sthelens.ac.uk/ucsh/additional-needs>

6.7 Applicants with criminal convictions

As part of its duty of care to staff and students, University Centre St Helens asks applicants for information about any relevant unspent criminal convictions. This information is assessed

before any offer of entry is made. The assessment is undertaken by the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Having a criminal record does not necessarily prevent applicants from studying at University Centre St Helens. This will depend on the nature of the course applied for and the circumstances and background of the offence.

6.8 Fraud and omitted details

University Centre St Helens reserves the right to withdraw any offer made on the basis of an application which has been found to contain fraudulent information. University Centre St Helens may also withdraw the offer of a place if an applicant has been found to have omitted key information from their application. Any student found to have been admitted on the basis of fraudulent information may have their studies terminated.

6.9 Re-admission of students

If an applicant has previously studied at University Centre St Helens, we require that they indicate this in their application. If an applicant has previously been excluded from St Helens College or University Centre St Helens, they should also indicate this in their application. If we decide to offer a previously excluded applicant a place, their re-admission will need to be approved by the Deputy Principal.

6.10 Deferred applications

University Centre St Helens welcomes deferred applications (requests to be admitted the year after an application is made) and will also usually consider requests from students to defer after an application has been submitted.

7. Applicant data

The data submitted as part of each application is used to assess the suitability of an applicant for study at University Centre St Helens. Anonymised data is also used by the University for statistical and reporting purposes.

Application data forms part of the student record for applicants who are admitted. Personal data for applicants who are not admitted to University Centre St Helens is deleted after two years.

University Centre St Helens complies with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 in its use of applicant data.

Further information about data protection policies at University Centre St Helens can be found in our Privacy Policy: <http://www.sthelens.ac.uk/privacy-policy>

8. Appeals and complaints

University Centre St Helens aims to consider all applicants fairly and in line with the principles outlined in the Student Admissions Policy. However, we recognise that there may be occasions where applicants wish to request an appeal (review of their application), or make a complaint about the admissions process.

If an applicant feels that they may have a cause for an appeal or complaint, the Complaints Procedure can be found at: http://www.sthelens.ac.uk/images/college-information/public-information/SK_College_Group_Complaint_Procedure_-_Sept_2019.pdf

We advise all students to note the section on Feedback (see section 6.5) prior to submitting an appeal or complaint.