



QA Higher Education Admissions Policy

Prepared by: Head of Admissions Partnership and Operations

Prepared for: Commercial Leadership Group

Date: May 2026

Issue: Version 1.1





Version Control

Document Information	

Document Approval		
Name	Position	Viewed / Comments
Academic Board		Approved

Revision History			
Version	Issue Date	Author	Description of Change
V1.0	November 2025	Consultant	Initial Policy Created
V1.1	May 2026	Consultant	Policy updated to address points raised by Director of Quality Assurance, Head of Legal and Provost



Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Policy Ownership & Responsibilities	3
3. Scope.....	3
4. Definitions.....	3
5. Policy Statement.....	4
6. Data Protection.....	12
7. Related Policies and Procedures.....	12
8. Implementation	13
9. Monitoring, Compliance & Review.....	13
10. Equality of Opportunity.....	13
11. Further Information.....	13



1. Introduction

QAHE and its university partners are committed to fair, transparent and inclusive admissions practices that uphold academic standards and promote access to higher education. This policy outlines the principles and procedures governing the recruitment, selection and admission of students to the programmes of study offered by QAHE.

2. Policy Ownership & Responsibilities

This policy is owned by the QAHE Head of Admissions Partnerships and Operations with oversight from the Director of Admissions. It is the responsibility of the Head of Admissions Partnerships and Operations to review this document ahead of each admissions cycle in conjunction with relevant counterparts within each of QAHE's partner institutions.

Responsibility for the effective implementation of the policy lies with the Director of Admissions who assumes overall responsibility for the Admissions function.

3. Scope

This policy defines the roles, responsibilities, and processes governing collaboration between QAHE and its university partners in the selection and admission of applicants to QAHE delivered programmes. It ensures a fair, consistent, and transparent experience for all applicants. The policy sets out the authority and responsibilities of staff and applicants involved in the process and provides guidance on resolving any disputes that may arise.

4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Admissions	Practices and processes developed by QAHE for admitting applicants up to enrolment.
Applicant	Anyone who has applied for a QAHE delivered programme.
Current Student	Anyone enrolled on a QAHE delivered programme.
ECCTIS	Official UK national agency providing services on authenticity of academic qualifications, institutions, skills and migration on behalf of the UK Government.
Interview	Two types of interviews are typically used as part of the selection and admissions process. Academic Interview: Assessment of applicant suitability for the programme of study in terms of prior knowledge and skills acquired through prior learning or work experience.



	Admissions Interview: Assessment of applicant readiness, motivation and overall suitability for their intended programme of study
Non-Standard Route	A non-standard entry route is designed for applicants who may not have the required academic qualifications but can show readiness through work experience, achievements or alternative learning.
Prospective Applicant	Anyone considering applying for a QAHE delivered programme.
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service.

5. Policy Statement

5.1. Key Aims and Principles

The key aims and principles of this policy are:

- The selection and admission to all programmes offered by QAHE are governed by this policy and the relevant university partner policies listed in section 6.
- In implementing the policy QAHE aims to adhere to principles of transparency, efficiency, professionalism, reliability, inclusion, courtesy and fair access.
- QAHE considers all applications to study based on the applicant's ability and potential to succeed within higher education.
- QAHE admits applicants to programmes based on academic achievement or professional achievement as outlined by its university partners.
- The entry criteria for each programme will reflect the programme and professional body requirements of that programme and will be agreed by the university partner and made publicly available on the QAHE website.
- QAHE works with its university partners to ensure that all selection and admissions processes are annually reviewed and enhanced as appropriate to ensure that they:
 - Remain current and effective
 - Accurately reflect the strategic objectives of QAHE and its partners
 - Meet customer, professional, academic, legislative and regulatory requirements
 - Allow for staff involved in the admissions process to be appropriately selected, qualified and trained to deliver a consistent, fair and professional service to all applicants.

5.2. Pre-Application

QAHE and its university partners provide comprehensive information on programmes to ensure prospective applicants can make an informed decision before they apply. This information is available through several sources which include:

- QAHE and partner university websites and social media platforms
- Printed collateral including flyers, leaflets and prospectuses
- UCAS course listings



- QAHE applicant portal
- QAHE and university partner on-campus events
- QAHE and university partner agent networks
- Participation at schools and community career events both in the UK, internationally and virtually

Enquirers who have questions about their suitability for a programme, the application process or any aspect of the programme can contact a QAHE representative for information, advice and guidance. QAHE understands its obligations under both the Office for Students conditions of registration and wider consumer protection law to ensure that the information provided to enquirers is accurate, accessible and up to date at the time of the enquiry.

5.3. Applying

QAHE's website and the websites of its partner universities explain the application process for each programme including:

- How and when to apply for a programme
- Information for prospective applicants on application and acceptance deadlines
- What the application and selection process involves
- Information for international applicants that require a student route visa
- Expected communications between QAHE, the university partner, and the applicant
- Deadlines for any financial support arrangements such as scholarships, bursaries or government loans

How prospective applicants apply to study with QAHE and its university partners depends on the programme, as follows:

- Pathway Programmes – Applicants apply directly via the QAHE online application form, unless otherwise required by the partner university.
- Undergraduate Degrees – Applicants apply directly via the QAHE online application form, unless otherwise required by the partner university.
- Postgraduate Degrees – Applicants apply directly via the QAHE online application form, unless otherwise required by the partner university.

QAHE and its university partners reserve the right to reject applications that are incomplete. Enquirers are welcome to seek advice on completing the application form from QAHE representatives prior to applying. Applicants must ensure all information presented as part of their application is complete, accurate and truthful.

5.4. Entry Requirements

Entry requirements are written criteria set by QAHE's university partners in compliance with programme and professional body requirements. These are reviewed annually. All entry requirements are available on the QAHE and partner university websites. These requirements include both academic and non-academic requirements where applicable.



5.4.1. Academic Background

International and domestic applicants follow the same admissions process in terms of the assessment of their academic eligibility for a programme of study. Enquirers that are holding qualifications which are not specified on the QAHE, or partner university websites are welcome to enquire to the Admissions team prior to applying as to whether their qualifications meet the entry requirements. In these instances, ECCTIS is used as a benchmark for assessing less commonly encountered qualifications and in conjunction with the university partner, will be judged on a case-by-case basis.

Programmes may also provide a non-standard entry route for applicants and where these are available, they will be clearly advertised.

5.4.2. English Language Proficiency

Where English language capability needs to be demonstrated, the requisite levels are clearly outlined on the QAHE and partner university websites under the entry requirements for each specific programme. Applicants will be required to:

- Provide their most recent evidence of English language
- Meet the English language requirement before they can receive an unconditional offer

5.4.3. Personal Statements

Personal statements help assess an applicant's interest and suitability for the chosen course.

5.4.4. References

References may be required for certain courses, in line with partner entry requirements, and may also be requested when an applicant is assessed via the non-standard route to support their application.

5.4.5. Interviews

Applicants identified for an interview will be notified promptly. Interviews are usually conducted online, and responses are recorded in the applicant's file. Applicants unable to communicate effectively during the interview process may need to pass a formal English test before progression.

5.4.6. Under 18 Applicants

In accordance with QAHE and partner university regulations, applicants who will be under the age of 18 at the time of enrolment are required to comply with the relevant QAHE and university partner policies listed in section 6.

5.4.7. Immigration Requirements (International Applicants)

Applicants seeking a Student Route visa must meet UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) regulations. International applicants can expect additional stages to their applicant journey that are



overseen by QAHE's CAS team in collaboration with staff at the university partner. QAHE may request additional information or conduct UKVI checks, which can extend processing times.

Key considerations include:

- Academic Progression: Applicants must progress to a higher-level course unless justified under Student Route rules.
- Immigration History: Full disclosure of UK visits, applications, and refusals is required. QAHE may verify details with UKVI.
- Study Limits: Applicants must provide complete academic and immigration history to confirm eligibility within UK study time limits.
- Pre-CAS Interviews: QAHE or partner institutions may conduct interviews to assess visa application success likelihood. CAS issuance is at QAHE and the partner university's discretion, even after an unconditional offer has been made.
- Financial ability: All students must have sufficient funds to pay tuition fees and living expenses during their period of study, and applicants may be asked to give details of their funding arrangements at the point of application.

5.5. Decisions

The selection of applicants is conducted by the QAHE Admissions team in collaboration with each university partner. The QAHE Admissions team is responsible for assessing each application and usually make the decision to make an offer based on the application meeting the entry criteria for the chosen course.

Prospective applicants who require adjustments in teaching, learning and/or assessment because of disability or health conditions are requested to disclose this at the point of application. QAHE and its university partners only use this information to ensure that appropriate adjustments and support are provided to students to enable them to successfully undertake programmes without prejudice. Further information on this can be found in the relevant university partner equality, diversity and inclusion policy in section 6.

Once an application is submitted, the QAHE Admissions team will confirm receipt of the application. The application is then reviewed by the QAHE Admissions team with a decision recorded on QAHE's admissions system, or the system of a university partner if applicable. Decisions are normally communicated via the applicant portal, email or UCAS and applicants can expect to receive a decision within ten working days of submission. A decision outcome is likely to be one of the following:

- A request for further information to assess your suitability for your chosen programme
- An invitation to attend an interview
- A conditional offer
- An unconditional offer
- A decision to not offer you a place
- A counter-offer (an offer to study an alternative programme to the one you initially applied for)

If you are required to attend an interview, once you have attended you will receive a decision, via email, typically within two working days.



5.6. Offers

Applicants that are made a conditional or unconditional offer will receive an offer email that includes or refers applicants to details of:

- Clear information as to what the conditional or unconditional nature of the offer has been based on
- Programme fees
- Programme dates
- Terms and Conditions of the offer
- Fee schedules
- How to accept their offer
- Acceptance and enrolment deadlines
- The process for declining an offer, deferring or cancelling a place

Applicants who have applied previously and been unsuccessful in securing an offer should consider any feedback provided before re-applying for the same programme. QAHE and its university partners reserve the right to refer to information from previously submitted applications (if still retained in line with the General Data Protection Regulation) when considering re-applications.

5.7. How to Respond to an Offer

Applicants should follow the instructions outlined in the student terms and conditions to accept a place ensuring key application deadlines are met.

Applicants can only accept one offer of a place at any one time, meaning that they cannot be enrolled on two programmes simultaneously.

If a deposit is required, this will clearly be stated in the offer letter.

By accepting the offer of admission, applicants agree to abide by the respective student terms and conditions and if prior to registering as a student, they have failed to abide by these terms and conditions, the offer may be withdrawn.

If, for any reason, an applicant no longer wishes to proceed with an application, they can inform QAHE and its partner universities by declining the offer. If an offer has not yet been received, the application can be requested to be withdrawn via the applicant portal.

If any fees or deposit amounts have been paid you may not be eligible for a refund. Full details on statutory rights to cancel, along with any financial implications of cancelling an acceptance are available in the applicable terms and conditions.

5.8. Meeting the Conditions of an Offer

For undergraduate applicants that apply via UCAS, QAHE and the partner university receive a range of examination results directly from UCAS. For any examination results not covered by UCAS' Awarding Body Linkage service, and for applicants who applied directly to QAHE and its university partners, any documents should be provided via the QAHE applicant portal.

Applicants who have met all the conditions of their offer will be issued with an unconditional offer confirming that they have met all the conditions of their initial offer.



Where reconsideration for the same programme is not possible, an applicant will be considered for any appropriate and available alternative programmes. The applicant is not obligated to accept this change of course offer if made.

5.9. CAS Issuance (For International Students requiring a Student Route Visa)

Once an international applicant has met all outstanding conditions, accepted their offer and paid their deposit, the QAHE Admissions team will request a CAS from the relevant partner institution on behalf of the applicant. This process may require the applicant to submit copies of their financial evidence for assessment. Provided all requirements are met, the CAS will normally be issued to the applicant within 5 working days. The relevant partner, as the student sponsor licence holder, has sole discretion as to whether they issue a CAS to any applicant.

5.10. Enrolment and Induction

Prior to beginning their studies, applicants are required to complete an online enrolment process with QAHE and the university partner. Information on how to do this will be sent out approximately one month prior to the course start date.

If applicants do not complete the online enrolment by the deadline stated, they may not be permitted to enrol, and international students may have their CAS withdrawn. The expectation of QAHE and its university partners is that students should start their programme on time. However, in exceptional circumstances students will be permitted to start late in accordance with the Late Start Policy, details of which can be found in section 6.

5.11. Fee Status

Fee status is determined in accordance with the United Kingdom legislation and is consistent with the guidance published by the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA).

Where the information provided by an applicant does not allow a decision to be made, the applicant will be informed of this and asked to complete the tuition fee assessment process and to provide additional documents. Where available, this will be a partner specific fees assessment questionnaire.

5.12. Programme Changes

To manage course capacities, the University may withdraw an offer once all or nearly all the places available on a specific programme are filled. Applicants will be notified if this happens and provided with information on alternative courses and start dates available.

5.12.1. Course Cancellation

Although QAHE and its university partners take all reasonable steps to avoid changes to a programme between application and registration, sometimes it may be necessary to change the specification or location of a programme or discontinue a programme. A course cancellation is the decision, by QAHE and its university partner, not to run a course i.e. a specific mode of a programme relating to a specific start date in a specific location, after it has been



opened for applications. Courses may be cancelled for educational, practical or business reasons e.g. where student numbers are expected to be so low that the student learning experience will be harmed, or where a campus is unable to resource a course, or where a course will not be economically viable.

QAHE and its university partners endeavour to run all courses advertised but sometimes this is not possible due to reasons beyond their control

To minimise the inconvenience and expense of course cancellation to applicants QAHE will:

- Use its reasonable endeavours to recruit sufficient students to be able to run the course
- Consider any regulatory recommendations and requirements, the educational experience and the circumstances of individuals who have accepted a place on the course in making a decision in relation to cancellation
- Aim to provide applicants with no less than one month's notice of cancellation prior to the start of the course (subject to circumstances beyond our control)
- Provide applicants with information, advice and guidance in relation to alternative options

Should applicants decide to withdraw their application as a result of the cancellation, any refunds will be administered as set out in the student terms and conditions.

5.12.2. Course Closure

- Course closure is the decision to permanently stop offering a particular programme of study This is in contrast to course cancellation which refers to the decision not to offer a programme for a particular intake at one or more locations. A programme is permanently withdrawn at a specific campus or campuses, but the campus or campuses are continuing to deliver other programmes
- A campus is being closed or being relocated elsewhere
- There are significant changes to the character of the programme, and as such the programme may be revalidated

Where a decision to close a course is taken, the partner university course closure protocol is followed in order to support students remaining on programmes to achieve their desired academic outcomes.

5.13. Deferrals

A deferral is any instance in which an applicant requests to delay their start of a course to a future intake. This can be requested at any stage in the application process up to enrolment. Deferral requests are only considered if the revised start date falls within the same academic year as the original start date. Deferrals that fall outside of this window will not be considered and applicants will need to reapply. Deferral is not guaranteed as the applicant will always be reconsidered against any new revised entry criteria. Applicants must also ensure that any qualifications used for entry remain valid for the intended future intake. Further information on deferral is available in the terms and conditions.



5.14. Transfers

Applicants are permitted to request to transfer their application to an alternative programme, mode of study or location. All transfer requests will be considered by QAHE and its university partner on a case-by-case basis and confirmation will be communicated via email as to whether a transfer request has been approved.

5.15. Withdrawals

Applicants can choose not to continue with their application at any point in the admissions process up to the point of enrolment as outlined in the respective terms and conditions. Prospective students are asked to notify the Admissions Team by using the applicant portal if they do not wish to continue with their application.

5.16. Fraudulent Applications

QAHE and its university partners reserve the right to authenticate qualifications and other documents presented as part of the application process. If any information relevant to the application is found or suspected to be fraudulent, the application will be deemed void and the offer of a place revoked.

Applicants may not omit any requested or relevant information, make any misrepresentation (for example, through plagiarism) or give false information at any point of the application process including after an offer is made. Should this occur QAHE reserves the right to refuse the application, withdraw an offer of a place and/or revoke a student's registration. QAHE may also, in accordance with its external obligations, notify third party organisations about any suspected misrepresentation.

5.17. Appeals and Complaints

QAHE and its university partners operate an efficient, fair and courteous service to all applicants. In the event of a problem occurring at any stage of the applicant journey, then QAHE's complaints policy will apply. QAHE operates a staged approach to complaint handling and will try to resolve any complaints informally where appropriate before moving to a formal stage if required. .

5.17.1. Appeals

There is no right of appeal against the academic or professional judgement of members of staff responsible for making decisions on applications.

An appeal is any request to alter a decision or action taken on an individual application. Examples may include:

- A request to edit the wording of an offer condition
- A request to review a fee status calculation
- A request to review a rejection decision based on new information

Requests for further information, such as reasons for rejection, or general complaints do not constitute appeals.



QAHE and its university partners reserve the right to refuse entry to any of its programmes to an applicant who:

- Does not meet the entry requirements specified for the programme
- Would contravene UKVI compliance by QAHE or its university partner
- During previous study or during any part of the application process, displayed conduct deemed to be unacceptable in accordance with QAHE and partner university policies.

An applicant may appeal against the handling of their application if there is reason to believe that:

- The decision made by QAHE or its university partner contradicts the published entry criteria or admissions process
- There was an administrative error in the handling of the application

There is no right of appeal for applications where:

- The appeal is from a third party
- The dispute concerns professional or academic judgement. E.g. disputes regarding the equivalency or suitability of qualifications, the suitability of a personal statement, or the assessment of an interview or entry test.

Should an informal resolution not be possible with a member of the Admissions team, an appeal may be made in writing via the applicant portal to the Head of Admissions within 30 days of the event. The appeal will be investigated and a response provided usually within 15 working days of receipt. The decision of the Head of Admissions is final and there are no further avenues of appeal beyond this stage.

5.17.2. Complaints

A complaint will normally relate to a general irregularity in the admissions process or policy. If an applicant feels they have been unfairly treated during the admissions process a complaint can be made, via the applicant portal, to the Head of Admissions QAHE's Complaints Policy will be applied to any complaints raised by applicants.

6. Data Protection

QAHE and its university partners collect personal data as part of the admissions process. This information is held in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and QAHE and the relevant university partner's privacy policies.

7. Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read alongside the following QAHE policies:

- U18's Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Late Start Policy
- Criminal Convictions Policy

It should also be read alongside the relevant university partner policies that cover recruitment, selection and admission of applicants.

- London Metropolitan University



- Northumbria University
- Oxford Brookes University
- Southampton Solent University
- Ulster University

8. Implementation

An internal QAHE operational handbook for each university partnership provides staff with a detailed process map for the effective administration of each admissions cycle.

9. Monitoring, Compliance & Review

At the conclusion of each academic year an audit is conducted on the implementation of the admissions policy with each university partner. This helps to ensure that the process is administered effectively, with any issues identified and addressed, and also ensures that QAHE and its university partners have the regular opportunity to assess the impact of its policy on applicants and to ensure it is meeting their stated objectives.

10. Equality of Opportunity

QAHE and its university partners are committed to providing equality of opportunity to all, irrespective of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion or sexual orientation.

QAHE undertakes to monitor the effectiveness of its Admissions Policy in the context of fair access and equality on an annual basis with any feedback provided to university partners through its governance framework.

11. Further Information

For queries, please contact the [Admissions](#) team.

