



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Admissions
Service.

Student Admissions Policy

Purpose

This policy sets out the University's 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 Undergraduate and Postgraduate courses.

Responsibility/Monitoring

This policy is the responsibility of the Head of Admissions. The policy is monitored and reviewed annually by the University in light of experience, research and good practice (see section 2). The policy takes account of relevant legislation, including the Data Protection Act 1998, Equality Act 2010, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Human Rights Act 1998.

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1. The University's recruitment and admissions aims

The University's recruitment and admissions support the goals and aims of the University as laid out in its Mission, Vision and Identity and Strategic Plan. The University's Mission, Vision and Identity and Strategic Plan can be found at: www.sheffield.ac.uk/strategicplan/mvi

Our goal is to produce Sheffield Graduates who demonstrate impact, excellence and distinctiveness in their chosen field. We aim to recruit students:

- of the highest academic and intellectual ability
- with the potential and motivation to succeed on our courses
- who will fully engage with, and benefit from, studying at the University

We aim also to achieve a student community that is balanced and diverse in terms of experience and background, recognising the educational as well as cultural benefits that this brings to us all. Our strategy for widening participation and ensuring fair access is outlined in our Widening Participation Strategic Assessment which can be found at:

www.shf.ac.uk/lets/projects/strategy/wpaccess

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 University
- 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 University's Admissions Service, along with other areas of the University, work in partnership to provide effective admissions services.

The **Admissions Service** has responsibility for determining and managing the University's Student Admissions Policy and procedures; providing advice and support to academic departments, enquirers and applicants; assessing applications and making offers on behalf of academic departments; developing and managing effective systems for admissions.

The Admissions Service also provides training and events for all staff involved in admissions activities. This includes regular forums for Admissions Tutors/Selectors and support staff, targeted training sessions on specific issues (as part of the University's 'Recruitment Matters' programme) and the organisation of working groups to look at particular issues.

Academic Departments (Admissions Tutors/Selectors) 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. Heads of academic departments delegate the responsibility for admissions matters to a principal Admissions Tutor/Selector (who may be supported by other staff within the department).

The University's **Admissions and Outreach Sub-Committee** (Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught) and **Doctoral Research and Development Committee** (Postgraduate Research) have responsibility for reviewing and monitoring central and departmental admissions policies, procedures and strategies for all University of Sheffield courses of study.

3. Information for enquirers and applicants

The University 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 and postgraduate print prospectus and on our website at: www.sheffield.ac.uk

We aim to provide accurate and up to date information in all of our publications, but - as the print prospectus is published up to 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

The University 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 the University 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 or postgraduate print prospectus and on our website at: www.sheffield.ac.uk/courses. Further information on requirements for undergraduate courses can also be found at: www.sheffield.ac.uk/undergraduate/apply/requirements

We welcome applications from students studying a wide range of UK, European and International qualifications that offer effective preparation for study at the University. Alongside the course information in our prospectus, more information on qualifications can be found on our website at: www.sheffield.ac.uk/international

In addition to academic entry requirements, the University requires all students to show that their English language is at a level which allows them to successfully complete their chosen course of study. Information on acceptable English language qualifications can be found at: Undergraduate: www.sheffield.ac.uk/undergraduate/policies/englang
Postgraduate: www.sheffield.ac.uk/postgraduate/info/englang

There are also non-academic additional requirements for applicants to health, health-related, social work and teaching courses. Applicants to these areas are advised to read the University's Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure Policy Statement which is available at www.sheffield.ac.uk/crbpolicystatement and www.sheffield.ac.uk/postgraduate/info/crb. More information is also supplied by the relevant departments.

5. Assessing applicants

The University looks for motivated students with the necessary academic preparation, as detailed in the entry requirements for each course, who will benefit from the University's learning and research environment.

We are keen to ensure that all applicants are provided with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills, potential and achievements. The University's methods of assessment are fair and valid, applied consistently for each course and regularly reviewed. The fairness and consistency of offer making for each course is managed by the Admissions Tutor/Selector and monitored by the Admissions Service. 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 Sheffield
- references, for confirmation of academic potential and personal qualities

Admissions Tutors/Selectors may also draw on a variety of additional methods to assess the suitability of applicants including:

- interview
- portfolio of work
- research proposals (for postgraduate research applications)

Information about departmental selection procedures is available in the prospectus, in departmental course brochures and on departmental websites.

For admissions to undergraduate courses, Admissions Tutors are also encouraged to take into account contextual information (information that sets the application in its educational or socio-economic context) and use this as additional information to inform their assessment (for example, taking into account whether the applicant has faced challenges in their education and how this has affected their performance in qualifications). The University's statement on the use of contextual data can be found at: www.sheffield.ac.uk/undergraduate/policies/contextual.

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: www.sheffield.ac.uk/undergraduate/apply or www.ucas.com

Applications for **postgraduate** courses are submitted via the University's Postgraduate Online Application Form (applicants can also request to submit a paper application). Information on how and when to apply can be found at:

Postgraduate Taught: www.sheffield.ac.uk/postgraduate/taught/apply/applying
Postgraduate Research: www.sheffield.ac.uk/postgraduate/research/apply/index

Applications for **initial teacher education (PGCE)** are submitted via GTTR (Graduate Teacher Training Registry). Information on how and when to apply can be found at: www.shef.ac.uk/education/courses/pgce/geninfo/pgceint.html or www.gttr.ac.uk

6.2 Time taken to consider an application

The University 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 contact applicants to explain the situation and when they should expect a decision.

6.3 Communicating with applicants

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

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

- Acknowledgment of the receipt of an application
- 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
- Registration information

In addition to the above, applicants receive communications from Departments which may include an invitation to visit the University and course specific information.

6.4 Offers of entry

Successful applicants will receive an offer of entry from the University. 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 receive the University's Terms and Conditions for Offer Holders which provide further information about the commitments the University and applicant make when the applicant accepts an offer of entry. These can be found at:

Undergraduate: www.sheffield.ac.uk/undergraduate/policies/terms

Postgraduate: www.sheffield.ac.uk/postgraduate/info/terms

6.5 Feedback

We feel it is important that unsuccessful applicants have the opportunity to receive feedback on their application. The University provides feedback on request to unsuccessful applicants. Feedback can be requested by email or letter by contacting the Admissions Service or relevant academic department.

We aim to respond to requests for feedback within 10 working days of receipt of the request. We will provide feedback in writing by letter or email. Following our feedback, if applicants

believe that they have grounds for a formal review of the admissions decision, they should consult the University's Appeals and Complaints procedure (see section 9).

6.6 Applicant with additional support needs

The University welcomes applications from students with disabilities. Their application is assessed following standard procedures (see section 5) and consideration of their support requirements will remain entirely separate. If an offer is made, an assessment of needs is carried out to ensure that the University can provide the required support. In the unlikely event that the adjustments needed to provide the required support could not be considered reasonable, the University undertakes to offer the applicant support in submitting an alternative application.

Further information about disability and dyslexia support at the University can be found at: www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/disability

6.7 Applicants with criminal convictions

As part of its duty of care to staff and students, the University asks applicants for information about any relevant criminal convictions. This information is assessed before any offer of entry is made. The assessment is undertaken by a panel of experienced staff and the process is managed by the Admissions Manager (undergraduate or postgraduate). Having a criminal record does not necessarily prevent applicants from studying at the University of Sheffield. This will depend on the nature of the course applied for and the circumstances and background of offences.

6.8 Fraud and omitted details

The University reserves the right to withdraw any offer made on the basis of an application which has been found to contain fraudulent information. The University also may 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.

7. Financial information

The University requires all applicants to provide evidence that they have access to sufficient funds to pay tuition fees and living expenses during their studies. Information about funding is requested in the application to the University.

Detailed information on tuition fees and student finance can be found at:

Undergraduate: www.sheffield.ac.uk/undergraduate/finance

Postgraduate Taught: www.sheffield.ac.uk/postgraduate/taught/finance

Postgraduate Research: www.sheffield.ac.uk/postgraduate/research/finance

As part of the application process, the University requires applicants to indicate whether they are eligible to pay Home/EU or Overseas levels of fees. The University uses the information provided by applicants to determine which category of fee they should pay. If we cannot make this assessment from the application, we ask applicants to provide further information.

8. Applicant data

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

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

The University complies with the Data Protection Act 1998 in its use of applicant data. Further information about data protection policies at the University can be found at: www.sheffield.ac.uk/cics/dataprotection

9. Appeals and complaints

The University 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 University's Admissions Appeals and Complaints Procedure can be found at
Undergraduate: www.sheffield.ac.uk/undergraduate/policies
Postgraduate: www.sheffield.ac.uk/postgraduate/info/appeals-complaints

We advise all students to note the section on Feedback (see section 6.4) prior to submitting an appeal or complaint.

10. Further information

For further information about University of Sheffield, please visit our website at: www.sheffield.ac.uk

If you wish to contact the Admissions Service directly, you can find our contact details at: www.sheffield.ac.uk/aid