

## QA 05 – ADMISSION OF STUDENTS

***This policy applies to the admission of students to a course leading to an Arden University award. Where a course is validated by a partner university or other awarding body then entrance is based on the requirements of that body.***

### ADMISSIONS POLICY

1. Arden University's admissions policy is consistent with its mission to be an independent Higher Education Institution (HEI) that delivers flexible and accessible UK university courses globally, empowering its learners to realise their life goals and make a difference to the world around them. The policy is reviewed regularly to ensure it meets the expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code) published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), and the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and Home Office and other immigration rules relating to student visa routes, including subsequent amendments.
2. In addition to the entry requirements specific for each course of study, as defined in the relevant course specification, Arden University aims to attract individuals who:
  - Can demonstrate the ability to succeed on their chosen course of study.
  - Will derive benefit from study in relation to personal and career development.
  - Have a commitment and enthusiasm to learn.
3. All applications are considered on individual merit in relation to the aims and learning outcomes of the relevant course of study. In addition to fulfilment of entry requirements applicants are required to demonstrate that they are permitted to study their course, this may include demonstrating the right to study at their chosen location and/or the requirement to successfully apply for a visa through the Student Route.

### EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

4. Arden University aims to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all applicants, regardless of nationality, age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, marital status, political or religious belief or other unjustifiable grounds.



5. Arden University promotes widening participation and encourages access to all individuals consistent with their aspirations, and their ability to meet the academic demands and professional requirements of the course of study.
6. Applicants with a disability or specific educational need are considered using the same entry requirements as for all other applicants.
7. Such applicants are strongly encouraged to disclose the nature of their disability or special educational needs on their application form or to contact Arden University's Inclusion services in relation to any concerns or special requirements regarding disability.
8. The specific requirements of students who disclose a disability or specific educational need on their application form or to the admissions team are referred to the Special Educational Needs advisor for an assessment of their specific needs and to enable Arden University to make any reasonable adjustments to enable the applicant to study with Arden University.

## MONITORING

9. Academic Board monitors Arden University's Admissions Policy, which is reviewed annually.
10. Statistics relating to student admission, progression and retention are compiled annually and used to inform relevant teams and the Academic Board through the annual monitoring process.

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

11. Arden University has sole discretion to determine:
  - a. The entry criteria for each course of study leading to an Arden University award.
  - b. The admission of any individual applicant to a particular course against the entry criteria for that course of study.
12. All applications are assessed on an individual basis and admission to an Arden University course of study is based on an assessment of the applicant's relative merits and abilities. As part of the admissions process you may also be required to attend an interview. This interview may consider your motivations and prior experience, your suitability for a student visa and confirm the information you have provided in your application.
13. The principal academic criterion for determining a candidate's suitability for admission to a course is that there is a reasonable expectation that they will be able to fulfil the learning outcomes of the course and achieve the standard required for an award. Arden University will look for evidence of academic achievement as well as personal and work/professional experience that provide an indication of ability to meet the academic

demands and any professional requirements of the course.

14. Specific entry criteria are specified in terms of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), Chapter A1 of the QAA's Quality Code and the prior study requirements for the relevant course of study. They may include educational qualifications (including minimum grades to be achieved) and the knowledge and skills required for admission. Where applicable, entry criteria may also include criteria defined by a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB).
15. The applicant must be aged 18 or over on the start date of their course.
16. Arden University publishes details of the entry criteria for each course of study it offers. Applicants for admission to a course of study must provide evidence that they have satisfied the entry criteria.
17. International qualifications are normally judged against ECCTIS (ENIC)<sup>1</sup> guidelines.
18. Where a course is validated by a partner university or other awarding body then entrance is based on the requirements of that body.
19. Information contained on application forms is normally treated as confidential within Arden University and will only be used by Arden University for the purpose of making an admissions decision. Arden University reserve the right, however, to inform other relevant parties for the purposes of preventing fraud and impropriety e.g. Awarding Bodies, Police, Home Office, UKVI and other relevant authorities.
20. Arden University may, at its discretion, vary its standard offer, taking into account the individual circumstances of applicants.
21. Arden University may, if it has just cause, withdraw any offer to study on one of its courses. This may occur post-enrolment if Arden University subsequently discover that a student has provided inaccurate or incomplete information to the university or other relevant bodies.
22. Except in cases where there have been significant changes to entry requirements, as recorded at Admissions Committee, an offer to study with Arden University is academically eligible for up to 12 months from the intake the offer was originally issued for.
23. Arden University regularly audit and review offers made to applicants. If it is discovered that an offer has been made which does not fulfil Arden University entry requirements, we reserve the right to recall or replace an offer to study with the University, although this would only be in exceptional circumstances where we do not have evidence of suitability to study at that level.

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<sup>1</sup> UK ENIC is the National Agency working on behalf of the Government to provide information, advice and expert opinion on qualifications worldwide

## APPLICANTS WITH A CRIMINAL CONVICTION

24. In the majority of cases, a prior criminal conviction will not preclude a candidate from being offered a place at Arden University. Such applications will, however, be scrutinised in accordance with QA 49 *Principles and Procedures for the Admission of Students who have a Criminal Conviction* to ensure that none of the following will be put at risk:
- Arden University's students, staff, or the wider Arden University community.
  - The integrity of the course.
  - The integrity of Arden University's processes.
  - Reputation.
25. Arden University reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a place, if the outcome of a disclosure indicates that such a risk exists or that the applicant will not be able to successfully complete the course.

## RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) AND PRIOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (RPEL)

26. Applicants to a course may be eligible for admission with credit through the recognition of prior learning (RPL) or recognition of prior experiential learning (RPEL). Applicants wishing to apply for RPL/RPEL must contact Arden University's admissions team and complete the appropriate forms for the application to be assessed. Applications for RPL/RPEL will be considered in accordance with Arden University Quality Assurance Document QA6: *Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedures*.

## READMISSION TO A COURSE

27. A student who has exited a course awarded by Arden University with an interim award because they have not fulfilled the requirements of a higher award, or who has been withdrawn from the course on the grounds of academic failure may not be readmitted to the same or equivalent course, or a course that includes a previously failed core module within a period of three years from the date of withdrawal.
28. Applications for readmission to a different course may be considered, in exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis, subject to a written case being made. An interview will be conducted by the relevant Admissions Tutor and will take full account of the student's previous performance at the University. In the case of student route this will also be subject to full consideration to the student's circumstances in relation to UKVI regulations relating to academic progression and study time limits.
29. Where readmission with credit is sought, cases will be considered in accordance with the University's normal regulations with regards to the Recognition of Prior Learning.

30. Students excluded due to Unfair Practice offences or disciplinary matters will not be considered for readmission to any Arden University course.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

31. For candidates whose first language is not English, evidence is required of spoken and written ability in English through approved tests such as IELTS. For an undergraduate course an overall IELTS score of 6.0 is required, with a minimum of 5.5 in each component. Post graduate courses typically require an overall score of 6.5, with a minimum of 6.0 in each component or equivalent.
32. Student route visa applicants must take an English test through a UKVI approved Secure English Language Test (SELT) if required to meet UKVI regulations. Approved providers are listed at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prove-your-english-language-abilities-with-a-secure-english-language-test-selt#approved-test-providers>. There are no exceptions to this requirement if it is needed to meet UKVI regulations. Further information is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa/knowledge-of-english>
33. Exceptions to the English Language test requirement may arise where the candidate has recently studied at a suitable level of English. Please note, this does not apply to Student route visa applicants (please see point 30). At Arden University's discretion, students may also be asked to undertake an English Proficiency Entrance Assessment interview with the English Language Hub as part of the admissions process.
34. Should it come to the University's attention at any point that a student is believed to be unable to communicate effectively or engage with their academic studies due to English language capabilities, Arden University reserves the right to re-test the student by any means deemed appropriate. If the student is unable to improve their English language skills to the required standard, or does not engage with the re-test request, Arden University reserves the right to refuse enrolment or withdraw the student from their course.

## INFORMATION AND ADVICE TO APPLICANTS

35. Arden University is committed to providing clear, accurate, complete and accessible information on its courses, relevant entry requirements and associated admissions procedures. All applicants should expect and receive fair and reasonable treatment during the admissions process by Arden University, our employees and our partners.
36. Arden University strives to ensure that clear, accessible information is made available regarding any non-academic requirements for entry to its courses. Where additional methods of assessment (e.g. portfolio submission) are used to select candidates, this will be explicitly stated for the benefit of applicants in Arden University's brochures and on Arden University website.
37. Entry criteria are published in the Arden University brochure and on the Arden University website.

38. Changes to any of Arden University's courses involving significant restructuring or discontinuation will be communicated to applicants affected by such changes at the earliest possible opportunity. All courses may be subject to a minimum cohort, if this is not met applicants will be communicated with to offer an alternative course or a later start date, where applicable. The Admissions team is responsible for co-ordinating the process of communicating with applicants affected by changes to courses and ensuring that appropriate advice is given to applicants.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

39. Applications are processed by Arden University's Admissions team. Admissions decisions are made under the scrutiny of a suitably qualified Admissions Tutor.
40. The Head of Admissions is responsible for ensuring that the admissions processes are clear and updated regularly and in accordance with this policy document.
41. The Academic Board is responsible for reviewing this admissions policy annually in the context of feedback and information provided through the annual monitoring review process.

### **TIMEFRAMES**

42. Arden University undertakes to process standard applications within 2-4 working days. Where a course is validated by a partner university or other awarding body then decision timeframes are based on the requirements of that body.
43. For applicants seeking RPCL and other highly specialised or complex non-standard cases, Arden University may require a longer period of time to assess the application.

### **FEEDBACK TO UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS**

44. Feedback is provided to unsuccessful applicants. Feedback will normally only be provided to the applicants and those authorised to act on their behalf, and not to any third party e.g. parents or other family members, teachers, employers.
45. In the case of a rejection of your application to study with Arden University, we will not normally consider a new application for a minimum of 12 months. In the case of fraud or impropriety as part of the application process, we reserve the right to not reconsider an applicant for admission in the future.

### **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (FOR COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS)**

46. Where an applicant believes that their application has not been dealt with fairly, or in accordance with Arden University's policies, principles and procedures, they should first put their case in writing, addressed in the first instance, to the Head of Admissions. If the above cannot resolve the matter, then applicants should follow the Arden University's Complaints procedure ([QA48- Student Complaints Procedure](#)). Arden University will normally respond to all matters relating to complaints about admissions within 20 working days.

### APPEALS PROCEDURE (FOR APPEALS CONCERNING DECISIONS ON ELIGIBILITY FOR A COURSE)

47. Applicants that wish to appeal a decision concerning their eligibility for a course should submit a request in writing to [admissions@arden.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@arden.ac.uk). This should detail the basis for the appeal and include any additional information or evidence (e.g. further qualifications or references) that was not provided with the original application.
48. Appeals will be considered by the relevant Admissions Tutor and outcomes will normally be provided in writing within 10 working days.
49. In exceptional cases, if it is not possible to meet these timescales, or if further evidence is required, the applicant will be notified in writing of the reason for the delay and a revised timeframe for an outcome will be provided.
50. Please note that the Office for Students (OIA) cannot consider complaints or appeals regarding admissions, unless the person complaining is a former student applying for re-admission, and the complaint is directly connected to their time as a student.

For more admissions information and advice, please contact [admissions@arden.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@arden.ac.uk).

Policy Name:	Admission of Students
Policy Reference:	QA05
Approval Authority:	Quality & Standards Committee
Last Approved:	October 2022
Responsible SMT Lead:	Academic Registrar
Responsible Department:	Academic Affairs
Policy Contact:	Emma Lanaghan ( <a href="mailto:elanaghan@arden.ac.uk">elanaghan@arden.ac.uk</a> )
Review Frequency:	Annually