



Bath Spa University Admissions Policy

Last updated December 2017

1. Aims

This policy applies to the admission of all students to Bath Spa University.

The University seeks to attract and retain motivated applicants of high calibre and potential from a broad and diverse community. This includes those who have varying experiences of education and who may have followed non-traditional paths to Higher Education and wish to benefit from the positive experience offered by the University.

The University is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities for all and our equality and diversity policy can be found below.

The University adheres to the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA – www.qaa.ac.uk/) UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Admissions), as well as following guidance from Supporting Professionalism in Admissions (SPA – www.spa.ac.uk/), and follows policies and practices that are consistent and transparent, through which all applicants are treated fairly and given prompt attention in compliance with appropriate legislation.

2. Responsibility of the University

Responsibility for oversight of and changes to all policies relating to admission of students, is vested in the Academic Board but for practical purposes is delegated to the University Registrar.

The Registrar is responsible on a day to day basis for ensuring that:

- Admissions processes and policies are clear and transparent and subject to regular review;
- Admissions staff are aware of and support the University's commitment to clarity and transparency;
- Admissions staff work to appropriate professional standards;

The University is committed to ensuring that all communication with applicants is conducted in a professional, courteous and respectful manner.

3. Consistency

All those involved in the admissions process must act in a way that is consistent with the procedures and principles set out in this document.

In order to ensure consistency, it is expected that Admissions Officers and Academic Course Leaders will meet regularly throughout the admissions cycle to review progress and to identify, and address, any emerging issues.

The University also works with a number of partners to provide high quality franchised and validated courses and continuous contact is in place between Admissions teams for consistency to be assured.

4. Process

4.1 Centralised Admissions

The University is committed to providing a professional admissions operation and has a centralised Admissions Team in place to achieve this. Specialist admissions staff review applications against the entry criteria for each course (which is published within each Course Listing on the University website and in the prospectus).

Where the applicant has non-standard qualifications or if an applicant narrowly misses one or more areas of our entry criteria, the application may be referred to the Course Leader in the School for consideration and may also be referred to the Registrar.

4.2 Selection

Undergraduate courses such as those within the School of Art and Design, Field of Music and Performance and Postgraduate courses such as Initial Teacher Training and Taught Postgraduate courses select applicants based on a submission of work and/or interview or audition and such selection is carried out by the Course Leader or specialist academic staff with expertise in the subject area.

Admissions Officers communicate decisions following the selection process via UCAS channels or directly to the applicant, depending on the method of application.

4.3 Undergraduate Admissions Tests

Bath Spa University does not use undergraduate admissions tests (as defined by UCAS) nor does it take into account A level unit grades. No discrimination is made against applicants who re-take part, or all, of a qualification or who have made previous applications to the University.

4.4 Late applications and deferrals

Applications received after the given deadline will only be considered if places are available. All courses, apart from Initial Teacher Training courses and BA Acting, are available for deferred entry. However, deferrals for more than one year are not normally allowed.

4.5 Feedback

Feedback to unsuccessful applicants will be provided on request if it is requested within two weeks of the decision being processed. All reject decisions are communicated to applicants together with the reason for the decision.

5. Non-traditional learners and returners to study

5.1 Minors under the age of 18

The University accepts applications from minors but would not act 'in loco parentis'. Legal guardian details would therefore need to be provided. Minors are subject to any legal age restrictions. The University's approach to admitting students under the age of 18 is set out in the 'BSU Policy for Students Under 18 Years of Age'. A link to this policy can be found at the end of this document.

5.2 Applicants with prior experiential learning (APEL)

Applications from candidates who do not possess, nor are working towards, qualifications necessary to satisfy entry requirements may still be considered under the University's Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) procedures if it is deemed by the Course Leader that the applicant is eligible.

5.3 Applicants with prior certificated learning (APCL)

Applicants who possess prior accreditation/certification may claim appropriate exemption from part of their course and should apply via the usual channels. The University will not consider applications on the basis of prior accreditation for courses of Initial Teacher Training.

6. Disclosure of personal details on an application form

Bath Spa University does not discriminate based on disclosures on applications forms relating to time in care or parents/guardians/carers who may have/have not undertaken higher education. The University is a holder of the Buttle Trust Quality Mark for Care Leavers, which reflects our commitment to applicants and students with a history of care.

A candidate's personal situation or circumstances of an exceptional nature may be taken into account if it is appropriate to do so, but generally only after qualification results are known.

6.1 Applicants with disabilities or mitigating circumstances

Applicants, who disclose a disability on their application form, will be sent a questionnaire by the University's Student Support Service after a decision to offer a place has been made. This is to ensure that the University is able to fully meet all requirements for support and adjustment.

Applicants with special information or mitigating or extenuating circumstances should put this in writing, with endorsement from their current place of study, to the Admissions Manager in the first instance. Cases will be considered individually, usually once the qualification results are known.

6.2 Applicants with criminal convictions

The University will seek information from any applicant that has declared a criminal conviction to satisfy itself that an offer can be made to that applicant. In the majority of cases, a criminal conviction will not prevent an offer being made. However, the University reserves the right to assess all such applications to ensure that admitting the applicant would not place staff, students or visitors to the University at risk.

Decisions on the admission of applicants with criminal convictions will normally be made by the Registrar. However, in the case of serious convictions, the Registrar may refer the decision to a group of senior staff set up for the purpose, or to the Vice-Chancellor.

Applicants to courses that involve contact with children or vulnerable adults will be subject to checking via the Disclosure and Barring Service. In the case of applicants for Initial Teacher Training, the decision whether to admit an applicant will be taken in the light of guidance from the appropriate Government Department on fitness to teach. The decision will be taken by the Registrar in consultation with the School of Education.

7. Offers

7.1 Entry Requirements

The University publishes its standard minimum entry requirements on the University website and in the University Prospectus. The University reserves the right, at its discretion, to admit any applicant who fails to meet the standard minimum entry requirements.

7.2 Undergraduate applicants

Offers for undergraduate places will be made on a case by case basis, and will generally be framed using the relevant grades particular to the qualifications the applicant is studying. The offer will set out what the University expects the applicant to achieve from qualifications which they have not yet completed.

The University will review each application when results are known (usually at 'Confirmation') and will confirm the places of applicants who have met the terms of their offer. However, depending on the availability of places at Confirmation, the University may be able to confirm places in respect of applicants who have failed to achieve the terms of their offer. The University would not expect to admit applicants with qualifications lower than the equivalent of CDD at A Level, but may do so in special cases.

7.3 Clearing (undergraduate applicants only)

The University will set a minimum entry requirement for applicants recruited through Clearing, which may vary from offers made at other times of the year.

8. Non-standard entry

8.1 Requests for late entry

The University will only consider applications for courses that have already begun in exceptional circumstances and in any case not after four weeks of teaching have passed. Consideration will only be given if a course still has places at that point.

No applicant will be allowed to commence a course later than four weeks after the course has started. Any applicant commencing a course after teaching has already begun will be provided with a disclaimer form that they must complete unless there are exceptional circumstances.

8.2 Reapplying to the University after having studied at the University previously

Candidates reapplying for the same or different course after having withdrawn from study at Bath Spa University or who had their course terminated by Bath Spa University should put their request in writing to the Registrar in the first instance, prior to making an application. Cases will be considered individually.

9. International applicants

The University welcomes applications from members from all international communities and from all backgrounds.

Applications should be made with actual, rather than British equivalent, qualifications clearly stated. International qualifications are evaluated with reference to independent guides such as UK NARIC and the UCAS International Qualifications Guide.

Specialist admissions staff will consider applications and liaise with the Fee Status Assessment Team regarding the fee status. This may involve issuing the applicant with a fee status questionnaire so that an assessment can be made.

Visa nationals, due to UK Visa & Immigration (UKVI) guidelines, can only study for full-time courses.

In keeping with all UK universities, Bath Spa University sets minimum requirements for the standard of English language proficiency expected of applicants for whom English is not the first language. Information on the University's English language Entry Requirement can be found on the University's website.

10. Applicant responsibilities

10.1 Responsibility of applicants in the application process

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their application is complete and to notify the University of any changes or amendments to their application.

If new information provided means that the circumstances upon which the offer was made are changed, an offer may be amended or, in exceptional circumstances, withdrawn. The University also reserves the right to correct errors where they have been made in the communication of decisions and offers. However, an offer made in error will be honoured if conditions have been satisfied and would only be withdrawn with the applicant's consent.

10.2 Fraudulent, inaccurate or plagiarised applications

The University regards the provision of false information as a serious matter and any such cases for undergraduate or Initial Teacher Education applicants will be referred to UCAS if appropriate.

Where an application is identified by UCAS as containing plagiarised material as part of their similarity detection scheme, the applicant will be contacted by the Admissions Service for an explanation, together with a request for replacement statement. The candidate's updated file is then referred first to the academic course leader and subsequently to the Registrar before a decision is taken.

The University reserves the right to reject an application or withdraw any offer if it is found that an application contains false, plagiarised or misleading information.

10.3 Inappropriate conduct

The University takes the conduct of its applicants very seriously. Communication by applicants with staff and within social media that is hostile, aggressive or otherwise inappropriate, whether expressed verbally or in writing, will normally first result in a formal warning. However, if the case is deemed to be particularly offensive, no warning need be provided prior to action being taken and

this may include the withdrawal of an offer or rejection of an application. Conduct which constitutes a criminal offence will be referred to the relevant authorities.

11. Changes to Courses

The University regrets that from time to time it may be necessary to change the specification or location of a course, or discontinue a course, sometimes at short notice. Any such significant changes to courses will be communicated to applicants as soon as possible by the Admissions Service and, where possible, an alternative course offered.

12. Complaints

Any queries regarding this policy should be addressed, in the first instance, to admissions@bathspa.ac.uk

The University's aim is to consider all applications fairly and equitably. If an applicant is dissatisfied with the way their application has been handled in accordance with this policy, they may submit a complaint in writing to the Registrar, who will seek to reply to their complaint within 14 days.

13. Appeals

There is a limited right to appeal and this should relate solely to the process of decision-making rather than the decision itself, which is a matter of professional judgement. The University Admissions Appeals process document can be found on the University's website.

If an applicant wishes to appeal, they may submit the details in writing to the Registrar, who will seek to reply to their appeal within 14 days.

14. Review of Admissions Policy

This policy is reviewed annually by the Registrar.

15. Related Policies

The Admissions Policy cites a number of other policy statements offering specific guidance on aspects of the process or for specific kinds of applicant:

- Disability
- Equality and Diversity
- Widening Participation
- Rehabilitation of ex-offenders
- Admission of minors

These policies can be found on the University's website.

16. Related Information

The Admissions Policy does not document processes and procedures that are related to the Admissions operation at Bath Spa University. Further information can therefore be found on the University Website.