

Higher Education Admissions Procedure

Owner: Head of Professional Services

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TRANSFORMING THE LIVES OF INDIVIDUALS
AND COMMUNITIES



Introduction

The Higher Education Admissions Procedure at SCC Group reflects relevant legislation and evidence-based practices led by Higher Education (HE) institutions and providers, including the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), guidance from UCAS and Admissions to Higher Education Fair Admissions to Higher Education: Recommendations for Good Practice.

Its main aim is to ensure the fair and transparent admission of students onto higher education programmes.

This procedure will be underpinned by the following guidelines and aims to:

- Be clear, comprehensive and well implemented as this is deemed to be fundamental to fair admissions to Higher Education.
- Be coordinated for the benefit of the applicant experience which intends to influence recruitment, transition and retention.
- Encourage a good understanding of Higher Education admissions processes amongst admissions staff.
- Contextualise poor attainment.
- Encourage the widening of access to Higher Education from all underrepresented groups.
- Minimise barriers for applicants and across all protected equality characteristics.
- Implement the key principles of fair admissions when selecting and admitting students.
- Ensure recruitment and admissions staff comply with all relevant legislation, including consumer protection and competition.

This procedure will be reviewed regularly considering current and relevant legislation.

1. Scope

1.1 This procedure describes the process of admission onto a Higher Education programme at SCC Group. The procedure applies to the following:

- Full-time undergraduate applicants
- Part-time undergraduate applicants
- All SCC Group staff responsible for considering and admitting an applicant to a Higher Education programme.

2. Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that the 'Principles for fair Admission' are adopted and that these principles are applied consistently. More so to ensure that all prospective students are considered for programmes, on a consistent basis and are able to access information advice and guidance as appropriate.

2.2 These principles state that a fair admissions system should:

- Be transparent.

- Enable Higher Education providers to select students who are able to complete the programme as judged by their achievements and their potential.
- Strive to use assessment methods that are reliable and valid.
- Seek to minimise barriers for prospective students.
- Be professional in every respect and underpinned by appropriate institutional structures and processes.

3. General Principles

- 3.1 SCC Group encourages and welcomes applications for all prospective students. It celebrates and values the diversity of its students. SCC Group is committed to providing a professional admissions service in order to allow fair and equal access to all who have the potential to benefit from Higher Education and the SCC Group student experience.
- 3.2 This procedure complies with relevant consumer, equality and diversity legislations affecting the admission of students and takes account of best practice, including precepts of the QAA's Quality Code of Practice, Chapter B2: Admissions to Higher Education.
- 3.3 SCC Group will treat all enquirers and applicants with respect to provide an admissions system free from discrimination ensuring equality of opportunity for all individuals seeking a place on a programme.
- 3.4 SCC Group will offer a wide range of opportunities for students with varying levels of prior achievement, interests and background, helping them to realise their goals and aspirations.
- 3.5 The SCC Group will recruit with integrity to all programmes providing impartial information and advice to enable enquirers and applicants to make appropriate choices in line with their previous experience, qualifications and career aspirations and to understand the opportunities for progression and career goals.
- 3.6 In some circumstances, Appropriateness to Study and Safeguarding policies may take precedence.

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1 Any change to this procedure will be approved by the SCC Group Quality and Standards Committee. The Head of Higher Education Quality is responsible for the management of this procedure but may delegate implementation to others.
- 4.2 The administration of this procedure is the responsibility of the following: Admissions Team, Marketing & Public Relations Team, Academic Teams and any other areas of the institution that may deal with enquiries and admissions to a Higher Education programme at SCC Group.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Student and staff consultation are important and underpins our Student Engagement Strategy. Both staff and students have been consulted on this procedure via our

Student and Staff Committees.

6. Linked Policies & Procedures

- Fitness to Study
- Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy

7. Salford City College Higher Education Admissions Process

- 7.1 Full-time undergraduates: Those who are applying for admission to a full-time undergraduate programme will normally do so through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). At SCC Group the process for admitting students through UCAS systems is centralised to the Admissions Team.
- 7.2 Part-time undergraduates: To apply to a part-time undergraduate programme an applicant does so through the internal SCC Group course application systems. Following this, the application is processed in the same manner as full-time undergraduate programmes.
- 7.3 International admissions: SCC Group does not accept applications from those who require a Tier 4 license to study. Further guidance from the home office can be found in the [Tier 4 Policy Guidance](#).
- 7.4 SCC staff follow the admissions procedure and associated processes to ensure a consistent and professional recruitment and admissions for all applicants. The process highlights the correct method of admitting the aforementioned full-time and part-time students, as well as those with criminal convictions and declared disabilities.

8. Selection Framework

- 8.1 SCC group set the standard entry requirements, subject to the regulations of awarding bodies that validate the particular programme. Entry requirements will be reviewed annually prior to the onset of the recruitment cycle by the Head of Higher Education Quality in conjunction with academic teams.
- 8.2 SCC Group accepts a broad range of qualifications and combination of qualifications for entry onto its programmes, including vocational and Access to Higher Education, alongside a range of qualifications offered to European Union. Qualifications may be subject to a NARIC (National Recognition Information Centre), the designated United Kingdom national agency for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills.
- 8.3 All applications received by the relevant UCAS deadline (normally 15th January prior to the year of entry) are to be given equal consideration. Such consideration will also be given to applications received after 15th January up to and including 30th June (end of main applications scheme through UCAS).
- 8.4 Applicants are expected to disclose information about any Disability or Learner difficulty that would help to identify and provide the appropriate levels of support.

- 8.5 Academic judgement will be applied to determine the standard entry requirements for each course and whether there are any variations to these. Admissions staff will use these requirements to screen applicants and to issue either an offer or a rejection.
- 8.6 If there is any doubt about a particular applicant's suitability for a programme, admissions staff will refer the application to the relevant academic teams. A decision will then be made in liaison between Admissions and the Curriculum Team.
- 8.7 For select programmes, auditions, interviews or portfolios are required as part of the admissions process. This will be facilitated through the Admissions Team with the final decision made by the Curriculum Team.
- 8.8 SCC group has processes to enable the gaining of credit towards courses for prior qualifications and/or learning through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) which are guided by the Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure. However, this is subject to the regulations of the awarding bodies that validate the particular programmes applied to.

9. Deferred Entry

- 9.1 If an applicant wishes to request deferral of entry to the following year, they should indicate this on their application form, or put a request in writing directly to the Admissions Team as soon as possible after applying. SCC Group can sometimes make offers for deferred entry however, we cannot guarantee that requests for deferral will be approved. Only in exceptional circumstances, and at SCC Group discretion can deferrals be granted.

10. Criminal Convictions

- 10.1 If it is appropriate or necessary to the course, SCC Group will carry out an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check on applicants. (In response to UCAS no longer asking applicants to declare whether they have any relevant unspent criminal convictions. SCC Group will ensure they respond appropriately to the changes).

11. Guidelines for the Recruitment of Students with a Criminal Conviction

- 11.1 Having a criminal record does not necessarily preclude an individual from studying at SCC Group. This will depend on the nature of the programme of study, the outcome of any Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, and the circumstances and background of the offences. We encourage self-disclosure by applicants.

12. Special Admissions

- 12.1 Special admission decisions may need to be applied in the case of significant disability whether a physical disability or a learning disability. A disability only arises when students have to interact with inaccessible courses or education institutions. The focus should be on removing disability barriers, including tackling discriminatory attitudes. Where an applicant is able to engage in further study we will aim to ensure they make good progress and achieve agreed outcomes and aspirations through application of reasonable adjustments and appropriate support whilst working towards independent learning.

13. Communication with Applicants

- 13.1 SCC Group will ensure that information supplied to applicants is clear, accurate,

reliable, valid and relevant. Communication of changes to any programmes involving significant restructuring or discontinuation will be communicated to applicants affected by such changes at the earliest possible opportunity.

14. Complaints

14.1 Applicants who experience a problem with any service provided by SCC Group should initially raise the matter with the person responsible for the service. If informal discussion does not resolve the situation satisfactorily, then applicants should use the Complaints Policy.

14.2 Applicants may not raise concerns about academic judgement.

15. Data Protection

15.1 SCC Group Admissions Procedures will be conducted in accordance with the Data Protection Policy and the relevant data protection legislation.