Admissions Guide

City University
Admissions Guidelines
(Undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes)
January 2010

1. City University welcomes applications from all candidates with the potential to succeed in Higher Education. We are committed to maintaining the quality and standards of the academic qualifications awarded to our students, understand the importance of creating a community that will benefit mutually in the pursuit of academic success and endeavour to maintain the excellence of our teaching and research both at home and abroad. To this end we recognise the importance of establishing policies and procedures for recruitment, selection and admission that acknowledge the need for fairness clarity and accuracy.

2. City University confirms its commitment to equal opportunities in all its activities. The University must not discriminate against any applicant on the grounds of political belief, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or social background.

3. The University recognises the importance of providing clear and objective pre-entry guidance on all matters relating to admissions in order that applicants can make decisions on their chosen programme or institution in an informed manner.

4. The University is committed to widening access by raising awareness, within the pre-HE community, of the opportunities, expectations and achievements possible for those who can benefit from the offer of a place.

5. The University will aim to provide swift responses to enquiries and applications to ensure that all necessary documentation is sent at the earliest possible time.

6. The admissions decision will rest on the qualifications, needs and aspirations of the applicant. Admissions tutors will make decisions within this broad policy statement, in accordance with its commitment to Equal Opportunities, and with regard to the specific entrance criteria of the chosen course. Selected candidates should, in the opinion of the admissions tutor, be capable of fulfilling the objectives of the course and achieving the standards deemed necessary for the award.

7. Transparent entry requirements, both academic and non-academic, should be used to underpin judgements that are made during the selection process.

8. Except by permission of the Deputy Vice Chancellor, a candidate shall not be accepted for entry to a programme of study unless he/she will have attained the age of eighteen years by the end of their first term (Period 1) in the University. [Students studying via foundation/access to HE programmes offered in collaboration with partners (i.e year 0 entry) should have attained the age of eighteen by the end of their first term (period 1) in their second year of study]. In exceptional cases, an applicant who would be under the age of eighteen by the end of their first term (Period 1) may be considered on their academic merits. However, in confirming a recommendation by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, full account will be taken of the issues relating to support and welfare - for example accommodation (such candidates will not be offered Halls of Residence places), potential need for clearance of staff
supporting the candidate (the programme team will require clearances through the Criminal Records Bureau), personal tutorial arrangements, etc.

9. Admissions tutors, appointed by Heads of Department, must be capable of deciding on the necessary mix of qualifications, experience and qualities necessary for successful completion of their course(s). Admissions tutors should be conversant with the application procedures, matriculation requirements, course aims and programme specifications for which they are responsible. They should, also, be conversant with the resources within the university and externally to whom they can seek advice or clarification.

10. The University should ensure that prospective students are informed of any significant changes to a programme made between the time the offer of a place is made and registration is complete and that they are advised of the options available in the circumstances.

11. The University should set out, in the prospectus and on its website, detailed entry requirements giving an indication of the typical offer level and applicant profile for each course. It is important to note, however, that having achieved or being predicted to achieve the specified grades does not guarantee the offer of a place. The University receives many more applications than there are available spaces and, consequently, the admissions process is competitive.

12. Admissions tutors should ensure that applicants have a degree of proficiency in English language sufficient to allow them to successfully complete the course. The level may vary depending on the programme chosen.

13. Undergraduate applicants applying for direct entry to year 2 will be considered at the discretion of the Admissions tutor who should ensure that there is clear progression and that the assessment requirements of the course will be met. Admission with credit will be dependent upon the same principles as admission to the beginning of a course. For most courses exemption from more than one year is not possible.

14. The University endeavours to treat all applications fairly and without prejudice. When complaints arise they should be dealt with as quickly as possible. Most complaints can be resolved informally but when an applicant continues to be dissatisfied the complaint should be referred to the Appeals, Complaints and Enhancement manager.

15. The University will explain to successful applicants the arrangements for the enrolment, registration and induction of new students.

16. The University recognises the importance of the need for monitoring and review of its admissions procedures and practices. It also understands the need for ensuring that appropriate action is taken arising from any review in order to improve the quality of its services and to respond to any changes in the applicant market.

Admissions Code of Practice

Introduction
This Admissions Code of Practice has been developed to assist staff in the operation and delivery of admissions processes. It has been produced by the university’s
Admissions Office in co-operation and consultation with representatives from school admissions staff.

It is intended to act as a guide or source of reference for staff involved in supporting admissions for both undergraduate and postgraduate, full-time and part-time modes of study. Some of the principles and resources will also have validity for short or other professional courses. Information contained in many separate publications on policy and procedural matters relating to the mechanisms of admissions and care of the applicant are combined in one document to help staff process applications in a manner that is speedy and efficient and takes into consideration principles of good practice.

It is hoped that you will find this document useful. The document can by no means be exhaustive. It is, however, our intention to revise and update the guide where necessary in the light of experience, research and good practice.

The Admissions Office

Forming part of Academic Services, the Admissions Office is responsible for co-ordinating and supporting admissions processes where appropriate and advising on related policy matters. To this end it endeavours to work closely with Admissions Staff at the university, together with a range of external agencies (UCAS, SITS, UKCISA, NARIC.)

Administrative support of Postgraduate admissions is provided by individual schools/institutes with the University Admissions Office facilitating access to web-based applications, providing advice on fees assessments and assisting with SITS support and training issues.

All Undergraduate applications received via UCAS are, currently, distributed to departments for decision-making but processed via UCAS by the admissions office. The administrative structure to support admissions within the University is liable to change as we respond to business process review and national development. As such the procedures in this document may be subject to change.

Staff in the Admissions Office are willing to give advice on all admissions matters and encourage co-operation and the sharing of experience.

To contact the Admissions Office:
Location: F301 City Innovation Centre, City University, Northampton Square, London. EC1V 0HB
Telephone: 020 7040 8028/ 8716 / 0223
Fax: 020 7040 8995
Email: Richard Broom – r.s.broom@city.ac.uk
ugadmissions@city.ac.uk
WWW: To be confirmed
Office Hours 9.00 – 5.00 Monday to Friday

(* ‘Admissions’ is used in this document to indicate activities relating to the management of an application after it has been received. The term ‘Recruitment’ could be construed as both applying to activities to influence individuals to apply to us but also to the effectiveness of our care during the admissions process.

The term ‘Applicant’ is used to denote an individual in any part of the admissions process prior to Registration. The term ‘Application’ refers to a fully completed and submitted online application or equivalent paper application plus supporting documentation (e.g. transcripts, references and other supporting documentation. Speculative communication is not considered the same as a formal application. The
term ‘Student’ is used to indicate an individual who has registered with the university.)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

City University welcomes applications from all candidates with the potential to succeed in Higher Education. We are committed to maintaining the quality and standards of the academic qualifications awarded to our students, understand the importance of creating a community that will benefit mutually in the pursuit of academic success and endeavour to maintain the excellence of our teaching and research both at home and abroad. To this end we recognise the importance of establishing policies and procedures for recruitment, selection and admission that acknowledge the need for fairness, clarity and consistency.

We aim to advise, guide and select the most appropriate applicants for the most appropriate courses in an efficient manner and with due care of the individual. We also aim to achieve accurately our statistical target numbers in consultation with the relevant university and external authorities and will endeavour to support the provision of appropriate business intelligence. The University recognises the importance of providing clear and objective pre-entry guidance on all matters relating to admissions in order that applicants can make decisions on their chosen programme or institution in an informed manner.

We, also, understand the need for the constant monitoring of our policies and practices and the importance of implementing measures to address and effect improvements or changes as appropriate.

You may wish to consult the QAA Code of Practice for Recruitment and Admissions (http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/default.asp). This is intended to provide institutions with guidance on good practice in selecting, recruiting and admitting applicants in a fair, open, equitable and consistent system.

Equal Opportunities

City University, confirms its commitment to equal opportunities in all its activities. The University must not discriminate against an applicant on any of the following grounds: political belief, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, parental responsibilities, race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or social background.

The City University London Single Equality Scheme
https://intranet.city.ac.uk/staff/hr/dps/policies/Single%20Equality%20Sch eme%20and%20Action%20Plan_June%2020101.pdf

Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

The University is expected to comply with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and to monitor by reference to racial groups the recruitment, admission, retention and progress of applicants. The relevant Statutory Instrument can be found at http://www.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts2000/20000034.htm

This policy document recognizes the importance of race equality in relation to admissions and notes that this is an area to develop.
Data Protection
City University is committed to protecting the rights of individuals to privacy with regard to the processing of personal data and has established a to support this commitment. The Data Protection Act applies to personal data held in a structured way in any medium (paper, computer, microfiche, tape etc). To comply with the Act, information must be collected and used fairly, stored safely and not disclosed to anyone unlawfully.
Further guidance on the Data Protection is available at: http://www.city.ac.uk/ic

Confidentiality
All applications must be treated as strictly confidential between the candidate, the referee, the Admissions Tutor and any admissions staff in the appropriate Schools/Institute involved in the selection procedure or other authorised staff. When an Undergraduate applicant signs the necessary declaration on their UCAS form, they are bound by agreement that the university can access and process their personal data and retain a copy of their application form to collect statistics, monitor equal opportunities and detect fraud.
In the ‘Notes for Guidance‘ with the Postgraduate form there is a section that states: ‘In signing the form you agree that the information you have given is complete and accurate. If you are made and accept the offer of a place you agree to abide by the rules and regulations of the university. Personal data in this form may be used in accordance with City University’s notification under the Data Protection Act 1998 and in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The university will also provide data to the Higher Education Statistics Agency. ‘

Responses to third parties
The University is occasionally contacted by third parties (e.g. parent/guardian, Schools or Police) for information on applicants or the status of an application. In these cases the Data Protection and confidentiality guidelines in this policy should be adhered to.
It is understood that in some instances, especially with undergraduates, that a parent, guardian or teacher may contact the university on behalf of the applicant. It is generally considered permissible to deal with such enquiries should the person be a nominated representative and that:

- the enquirer clearly be fully aware of all facts relating to the application
- that the enquiry or request be to the benefit of the applicant

References/Personal Data
Under the terms of the Data Protection Act an applicant’s reference is no longer confidential. The writer of the reference will not be obliged to disclose its contents but the university must show it to the applicant on request. An applicant or student wishing to see their reference should apply in writing to the Data Protection Officer. An applicant or a student has the right to be told if personal data is held about them and, also, to see such data. Notes on applications, fee assessments or following interviews should, therefore, be kept formal and discreet. Formal ‘access requests’ should, as above, be directed to the Data Protection Officer.
Freedom of Information Act

The Freedom of Information Act is a major constitutional reform. The Act employs two mechanisms for placing information in the public domain:

- It imposes on public authorities a requirement to publish information that they hold. Public authorities will be required to set up and maintain publication schemes, which will set out the categories of information which they undertake to publish.

- It establishes a right for any person making a request to a public authority to be informed in writing whether or not the authority holds the information sought and, if so, to have access to that information, subject to exemptions. This right of access is applicable from January 2005.

The public will have a right of access to any recorded information, however it is held. There is no formal application procedure, although requests for information have to be in writing (these can be electronically transmitted in the form of email) and give the name of the applicant and an address to which the information can be sent. There are cost limits on the extent of information that can be requested in any one request. If the authority cannot find the information requested the applicant has to provide assistance to locate it. Requests must be dealt with in 20 working days.

The University may charge fees for providing information but these are only a small proportion of the cost of finding information.

The FOIA will be enforced by the Information Commissioner, who can serve notices requiring authorities to disclose information if he/she considers that the facts merit it. Section 77 of the FOIA provides for a fine (up to £5000 in a Magistrates Court or unlimited in a Crown Court) if any person alters, defaces, blocks, erases, destroys or conceals any record with the intention of preventing disclosure.

Consumer Protections Regulations (Contracts concluded by means of distance communication 2000)

A distance contract is one where consumer and supplier do not meet at any time up to and including the moment at which the contract is concluded. For some courses an interview is compulsory. However for many, an applicant will be offered and accept a place through correspondence. Such contracts are governed by the regulations detailed on the link below:

http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/consumer-issues

The relationship between an applicant and the university is governed by the law of contract. If an applicant receives an Unconditional Offer and chooses to accept it under the usual mechanisms of the system, then a contract is formed. This would have to stand even though the applicant would not be bound to pay fees until the date of enrolment.

In the case of conditional offers the situation is more complex and advice on problematic cases should be referred to the Academic Registrars department via the Admissions Office.

Notification of the right to cancel a contract

Under the law of contract an applicant has the right to cancel an agreement with the university within 14 days. It is recommended that in communicating an offer to applicants that they are advised of

1) The programme of study
2) The year of entry
3) The duration of the programme
4) The fees (if not standard)

UCAS applicants who have used all five choices could potentially cancel their application and reapply within 14 days. Any problematic cases should be referred to the Admissions Office.

Retention of Application Data
Application forms should be stored securely. Application forms of successful applicants should form the basis of the School file. Records of unsuccessful applicants or applicants who do not take up the offer of a place should be retained for three years and then disposed of securely.

Roles of Admissions Staff

Head of Department/School
The Head of Department or School is responsible for selecting or overseeing the selection of suitably qualified Admissions Staff both Academic and Administrative. They are also responsible in conjunction with the relevant Admissions Tutor for defining the academic standards required for each programme of study, the qualifications, skills and experiences needed for successful completion of these programmes and for course reviews to assess changes in standards in relation to developments in the curriculum or the market place.

School Admissions Staff
The School's Admissions Staff are responsible for ensuring that the selection and admission of applicants is conducted in a fair and equitable manner, in accordance with the guidelines on academic standards as agreed with their Departmental Heads and with full understanding of the application mechanisms and deadlines relevant to the programme in question (e.g., UCAS, CAB, direct entry, etc.) They should ensure that candidates are able to demonstrate, by educational qualifications, skills, experience and motivation, that they have the potential to successfully complete their chosen course of study. Admissions Tutors should also be fully aware of the available options, modes of study, and course outcomes (e.g. professional accreditation) of the course for which they are responsible. They should also endeavour to make this information as transparent as possible to their applicants.

Central Admissions Office
The central Admissions Office is responsible for providing coordination and support to Schools for application and admission to all taught programmes. It is responsible for advising on the policies and procedures for selection and admission to Higher Education to both applicant and Admissions Staff. To this end it will liaise with UCAS, examination boards or accrediting bodies, the pre-university sector and other external agencies to keep abreast of national trends, policy changes and relevant legislation.

It will endeavour to provide pre-entry advice to applicants that is clear, fair, and appropriate; assist Admissions Staff in making decisions that fully consider the qualifications, skills and experience of potential applicants especially with non-standard backgrounds and assist any relevant departments in producing promotional material that is clear and accurate (at the time of publication.)

The office will produce, analyse and report on taught course admissions at both school and university level and will identify, develop and implement opportunities for improvement. It will also monitor the progress of applications during the admissions cycle and highlight any potential problems in meeting targets.
Selection

Arrangements for the support of admissions at both central and school levels should reflect the following:

Receipt of application
The University should facilitate swift responses to applications, and ensure that all necessary documentation is sent at the earliest possible time.

Making decisions
Admissions staff will demonstrate:
- a thorough knowledge of the requirements of the course. A clear perception of what constitutes a good application. This may relate to the standards achieved in examinations (both UK and international), relevant work or life experience and any other demonstrations by the applicant of their potential to achieve. The applicant should, ideally, be assessed as an individual.

- A consistent approach to decision making.
- A clear understanding, where relevant, of departmental target numbers (e.g. 'home'/'overseas' students.) For Undergraduate students the conversion ratios by course/department for both 'home' and 'overseas' and CF/CI are available from the Admissions Office.

If the decision to call an interview is reliant upon the additional information, a date must be set within one week of receipt of the additional information.

Application Closing Dates
The closing date for applications for taught postgraduate programmes is determined by the School concerned and may be as early as February for a programme starting in September.
The UCAS application system sets the application deadlines for all undergraduate programmes.

Application Fee
The University reserves the right to charge a postgraduate application fee. If individual postgraduate programmes wish to charge a fee it must be clearly stated in marketing material and on application forms.

At undergraduate level a fee is payable to UCAS for the processing of the application form. No fee is payable to the University in the later part of the application process including completion of the UCAS Record of Prior Acceptance form.

Entrance Criteria
The University has established general entrance criteria for all taught programmes (see Appendix 2), which must be adhered to.

Achievement or predicted achievement of the required qualifications does not guarantee an offer of a place. The University receives more applications than it has places available and the admissions process is therefore competitive. Applicants to the University may be rejected if the competition for admission to a programme
exceeds the available space and resources or if the admission of additional students would contravene the maximum intake permitted by the University or any other external agency. Admissions staff may consider applications on their own merits and in competition with others and may take into account examination results already achieved, predicted grades in forthcoming examinations, research project proposals, personal statements and academic references.

Individual courses reserve the right to judge the relevance and acceptability of any qualification when assessing applications.

Admission to the University is solely at the discretion of the University.

**English Language**

All applicants are required to demonstrate that their ability to understand and express themselves in both written and spoken English is sufficient for them to be able to benefit from and participate fully in their degree.

All applicants must meet the University's English language requirements. The School admissions staff should determine as part of the decision on admission whether applicants fulfil these requirements. Further detail on English language requirements are detailed in Appendix 3.

**Application Form checks**

Upon receipt of an application (whether online or paper) a number of checks must be completed by the School admissions staff:

- Check that the applicant meets the minimum entry criteria (and/or has relevant professional experience). If not the School admissions staff may reject the application.
- Check whether certified copies of certificates have been enclosed (Postgraduate only) - if not a request for certified copies may need to be made.
- Check the standard of English language indicated on the form. Check application form for declaration of previous (if any) criminal conviction. If applicant has declared a past criminal conviction refer to Appendix 4 for procedures.
- For Postgraduate courses ensure that two referees have been made, one of which must be academic.

Schools may wish to consider designating responsibility for standard offers on applications to a selected admissions administrator. By enabling School admissions staff to make basic offers, the admissions tutor is freed to concentrate on interviewing of candidates and consideration of less straightforward applications.

The Central Admissions Office is available to offer guidance at any point of an application.

**Fraudulent Applications**

Applicants and their referees in the UCAS system are required to sign a declaration confirming the validity of the information.
UCAS provide the Hunter facility and Similarity Detection reports which check for suspicious applications and plagiarism and alerts all universities of offending applicants. Where an applicant has clearly committed a fraud the application is cancelled for that cycle. Where fraudulent information is detected relating to a postgraduate application the university reserves the right to rescind any offer made.

Verification of Qualifications
Undergraduate
UCAS makes available to institutions most of the A/AS level examinations via the ABL (Awarding Bodies Linkage). They additionally provide IB, BTEC National Diploma, Irish Leaving Certificate and SQA results. As these have been verified by the awarding body concerned there is no need to verify certificates. However for all other qualifications (e.g. Access Courses or International Qualifications) it is the responsibility of the School to confirm the validity of an applicant’s qualifications.

Postgraduate
Before offers are made, applicants, other than graduates of City University, may be required to submit the original certificates, or certified copies, of relevant degrees and other qualifications.

The Central Admissions Office can advise on overseas qualifications, fraudulent certificates and general qualification queries.
The University subscribes to The National Academic Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom (UK NARIC) which offers verification services on international qualifications - http://www.naric.org.uk Tel: 01242 260010.

To obtain a Username and Password for this service please contact the Admissions Office.

Criminal Convictions
Applicants for both Undergraduate and Postgraduate programmes are required to declare whether they have previous criminal convictions.

Police & Health Checks
Where a student may have contact with a vulnerable individual or group as part of their studies, the university reserves the right to instigate a police check and for a successful check to be part or the sole requirement of a conditional offer.
All information obtained in a Health Check will remain confidential to the health practitioner and the candidate.

This is university policy and is to be applied to students at all levels of study.

Disabled Applicants
The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) places duties on higher education institutions as follows:

- Not to treat students with disabilities less favourably, without justification, than other students; and
- To make reasonable adjustments to ensure that people who are disabled are not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to people who are not disabled in accessing higher education, provided the institution has been informed of the disability.
Additionally the QAA Code of Practice asks institutions to consider making arrangements which ensure that all academic and technical staff:

- Plan and employ teaching and learning strategies which make the delivery of the programme as inclusive as is reasonably possible;
- Know and understand the learning implications of any disabilities of the students whom they teach and are responsive to student feedback;
- Make individual adaptations to delivery that are appropriate for particular students, which might include providing handouts in advance and/or in different formats (Braille, disk), short breaks for interpreters to rest, or using radio microphone systems, or flexible/interrupted study for students with mental health difficulties.

It is the responsibility of the Schools and Departments to:

- Actively enquire whether a student has a disability at the application stage and refer them to Disability Services, if appropriate;
- Refer students to Disability Services immediately if a disability comes to light subsequent to the application stage;
- Ensure a process exists to enable students with disabilities to discuss any course-related problem or barrier that arises as a result of their disability;
- Make course materials in a range of formats when it proves necessary;
- Take note of student feedback regarding any modifications which may have been implemented on their behalf;
- Provide students with disabilities with individual study strategies where necessary.

References

Undergraduate
For undergraduate applications UCAS request that a reference be included in the application form. Occasionally a reference is not included. In these cases the School admissions staff should contact the applicant directly requesting the name and address, where possible, of an academic referee.

When requesting that an applicant complete a UCAS Record of Prior Acceptance (late applicants), it is at the discretion of the School to request that a reference be obtained.

Postgraduate
Schools/Institutes must request two satisfactory written references. These are confidential to the University. Verbal or e-mail references will only be accepted at the discretion of the department. Referees should normally be teachers in higher education with direct knowledge of the applicant's academic work. When applicants with relevant work experience are unable to obtain a second academic reference or where work experience is particularly relevant to the module the candidate wishes to undertake, a person with knowledge of their employment activity may be nominated to act as a referee.

It is recommended that the School admissions staff request the references directly from the referee in to reduce fraudulent references. When requesting references indicate the programme, which the applicant is applying for, and a deadline for submission of the reference.

Interviews

Interviews may be used as part of the selection procedure in order to assess motivation and suitability for the proposed programme of study. However it is not considered good practice to make offers that are conditional upon a satisfactory interview as this may place the applicant in the unfair position of being asked to reply
before the interview. Assessment at interviews is subjective and cannot form a quantifiable measure of achievement in many cases. Interviews can be used in order to assess an applicant's ability to converse in English especially when they have non-standard qualifications (see appendix 3.)

**Entrance Tests/Set tasks**

In some instances it may be necessary for a candidate to complete an entrance test, set task or to submit past academic work. Written notification should be given to the candidate, which clearly outlines the format of the test/task, the length of the test/task and the time and place to report to. Candidates should also be informed when the results will be available and the timescale for a final decision on their application.

**Making & recording offers**

The Code of Practice detailed below has been drawn up for the benefit of both School and Applicant. The University is mindful of the fact that once an offer has been transmitted it becomes a form of contract with the applicant which legal precedent has shown cannot be rescinded. The practicalities of making offers through UCAS will be different from those of postgraduate offers.

· It is the responsibility of the School admissions staff to ensure that decisions are accurate and meet minimum admission criteria (including English language).
· All offers should be clear and unambiguous. Conditional Offers in particular should have the fullest possible definition of qualifications to be obtained.
· Applicants through the UCAS system should not be made offers conditional upon a satisfactory interview as this may place the applicant in the unfair position of being asked to reply to UCAS before the interview takes place.
· Ensure that a full and correct Summary of Conditions is generated on SITS for all Conditional Offers (undergraduate only).

Schools are advised to contact applicants in advance before making a changed programme, changed date of entry or changed point of entry offer. This may also apply when an amendment to conditions is made. Offers will be recorded using a bank of standard offers on SITS and then relayed to the applicant by transmission to UCAS in the case of undergraduates or by the use of a standard letter as designed by the Admissions Office in the case of postgraduates.

**Unsuccessful Applicants**

For undergraduate programmes rejections will be recorded on SITS and then relayed to the applicant by transmission to UCAS.

At postgraduate level Schools should write to the unsuccessful applicant indicating clearly which programme they have been rejected for.

Schools should consider whether they wish to offer feedback to applicants following a rejection. Feedback may be offered verbally or in the written rejection letter.

**Changes to programme of study**

Occasionally a School may wish to offer an applicant an alternative programme of study, or a programme may change after applications have been received. Schools must ensure that all students to whom offers have been made, are sent a letter informing them of:
· the discontinuation of the programme;
significant changes to the status of a programme, including, for example, the withdrawal or granting of validation by a professional or statutory body or the failure of an advertised programme to gain approval or accreditation;

significant changes to the content of a programme, such as the withdrawal of major modules or significant alterations to the teaching, learning or assessment arrangements for the programme;

any significant other changes such as to cost or location.

**Standard letters**

The Central Admissions office will approve the text for use in generic university standard letters where required. It will be the responsibility of the School concerned, however to generate and distribute those letters. Schools will need to ensure that letters offering admission address clearly, issues such as:

- The academic and non academic conditions which must be met in order to secure a place;
- fee status and total fees, including any other charges which will be levied;
- The normal length of study;
- The requirements which the institution places upon the student (for example, attendance, progress reports, contact with the supervisor(s));
- What the institution’s expectations are of its students in relation to academic and social conduct and performance;
- Making it clear that the student has an important responsibility for their academic studies and candidacy for a degree;
- The requirements and conditions of any School funding;
- Guidelines on how to accept/reject offer and the deadline for doing so

**Fee Status Assessment**

**Applicants Fee Status**

School admissions staff will be responsible for the determination of applicant fee status for the purpose of tuition fee payments. Further guidance is set out in appendix 5.

The level of tuition fees a student will pay is governed by the Education (Fees and Awards) Act 1983.

Borderline cases or queries in relation to an applicant’s fee status may be referred to the Central Admissions Office.

**Applicants who already hold a HE qualification and are applying for another HE course at an Equal or Lower Level Qualification**

UK/EU students who already hold a Higher Education qualification and are applying to start another Higher Education course at an equivalent or lower level (ELQ) will no longer be eligible for support in the form of a grant from HEFCE towards their tuition. This means that the University will have to charge these students the full tuition fee for their course. The exact fee will vary by course. You are advised to contact the admission tutor to discuss the fees.

**Payment of fees**
All applicants should be informed of the relevant (overseas or home) programme fee in the offer letter produced by the School. Information on payment methods is included in the induction pack.

Tuition fees are normally payable at the beginning of each year of study. For certain self-financing students (usually ‘overseas’ students) who pay their own fees an instalment scheme is available.

Please note that it is not open to:

- Students on programmes for which fees are payable on a modular basis, who must pay the fee for each module in full before commencing it.
- Students whose annual fee is £500 or less who must pay the fee in full at or before registration.

Fees may be paid by cash, sterling cheques, debit or credit card, bank transfer and in certain circumstances direct debit. Credit or debit card payment can also be made by telephone. Further information on paying fees is available on the Finance website (http://www.city.ac.uk/finance/student_info/payingfees.html).

Information for Successful Applicants

Registration & Induction

All students are required to register for their programme of study with the University. A registration timetable will be provided for all programmes.

It is the responsibility of the Schools to provide an induction for all students. This should include at a minimum, an introduction to the university, information services, and student welfare.

Monitoring

The University will apply a monitoring and auditing system that ensures that Schools adhere to the policy, procedures, vocabulary and practice as laid down in this Admissions Policy.

The Central Admissions Office may periodically audit offers made, timescales and turnaround times, inputting on the student records system and the accuracy of fee assessment.

Complaints

Appeals and Complaints

In considering an application for a programme of study at City University it must be noted that the University operates an equal opportunities policy and adheres to the Data Protection Act/Freedom for Information Act.

In support of the fairness, integrity and openness of the admissions system it is appropriate that applicants have the ability to appeal or complain to the university. An appeal would be a request for reconsideration of an application or alteration of a decision. An appeal would normally be made informally either through the Admissions Office or direct to the Department. The outcome would be either an amendment or an upholding of the initial decision.
A complaint would relate to the conduct of staff, procedural irregularity, level of services offered or evidence of bias during any stage of the admissions process. In the first instance complaints should be made, at the local level, to the Admissions Tutor and/or Head of Department. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response to the complaint then he/she should write to the Appeals Complaints and Enhancement Manager.

Tim Hudson
Tel: 020 7040 4152
Email: t.hudson@city.ac.uk
http://www.city.ac.uk/ace/complaints.html

Every effort should be made to investigate the complaint thoroughly and objectively and to determine the appropriate resolution as quickly as possible. If a complaint is upheld then the Academic Registrar's department should endeavour to put in place mechanisms or policies to prevent reoccurrence.

Inappropriate behaviour from Applicants

Admissions staff have the right to complete their work in a professional manner without abuse or inappropriate behaviour from applicants. If any member of admissions staff is subject to such behaviour from an applicant at any stage of the application process the Admissions Tutor should investigate the situation and decide the appropriate action that should be taken.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

The Role of the UCAS Correspondent

The UCAS process is based on mechanisms, precepts and regulations outside of the university but within which it is constrained for the admission of undergraduate applicants. Applications for full-time undergraduate degrees including those from non-standard entrants, international students and applicants for advanced standing must be made through the UCAS scheme. The UCAS correspondent has an obligation to ensure as far as is practically possible that the university adheres to the recruitment policy, regulations and timetable as laid down in the UCAS guidance for the year in question. Undergraduate recruitment is primarily UCAS based.

Schools should use the UCAS Admissions Guide and Decision Processing Manual as a source of reference but should refer to the UCAS Correspondent for confirmation or explanation of any technical or policy matters. The role and remit of the UCAS Correspondent is as follows:

- To act as a representative/correspondent for the university in any UCAS-related matters; to interpret and translate between UCAS policy/initiatives and university policy/initiatives, to advise on methods of communication with UCAS including the distribution of relevant UCAS publications/operational lists/UCAS Tariff information/statistical data; to act as a central repository for such information; to keep the university informed of developments in the sector and to advise on changes of policy/practice as a result of any such
developments; to attend and report from any relevant UCAS-related working-groups.

- To ensure that Schools adhere to the policy, procedures, vocabulary and practice as laid down in the UCAS Admissions Guide and Decision Processing Manual applicable to the year in question.

- To provide a central resources for advising applicants on UCAS processes and protocols in order to facilitate their progress through the system.

- To provide advice and support on UCAS policy in order to facilitate decision-making and to guide the School staff through the annual cycle.

- To manage the overall process between Schools and UCAS to ensure that Schools hit prescribed deadlines and are acting within the constraints of the scheme.

- To maintain the effective and timely transmission of decisions to UCAS including the resolution of locked records and errors.

- To conduct cursory checks on the validity of offers prior to transmission using centrally produced reports.

- To organise the central aspect of any future EXTRA/Confirmation/Clearing operation.

- To edit course and course requirements in the relevant UCAS publications and website.

**APPENDIX 2**

**University General Entrance requirements**

Applicants should have or expect to obtain before admission one of the following:

**Undergraduate**

Advanced Level/Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education

- Two 6-unit awards
- One 12-unit award

A/AS Levels (‘old style’)

- Two A levels
- One A level and two Advanced Supplementary

There are many other academic and vocational qualifications that may be considered comparable. Further guidance is available from the Admissions Office.
Non-standard entrants and those returning to education after a period of absence may not have to meet the general requirements mentioned above. They may be considered on the basis of individual merit but admissions staff should always ensure that an applicant’s experience and educational background match the course requirements.

**Postgraduate.**

Applicants for all postgraduate degrees should normally hold:

- an honours degree from a UK university,
- or a qualification adjudged to be equivalent

Additional entry criteria such as professional experience and/or further qualifications may be set by individual Schools/Institutes. Applicants not holding an honours degree or equivalent, but with suitable experience and/or professional qualifications, may be accepted as candidates for postgraduate programmes. Such candidates may be required to take a progress examination during the programme, or to take a qualifying examination or preparatory programme before registration for the postgraduate degree. The admission of such applicants is subject to approval by the Admissions Tutor.

Achievement or predicted achievement of the required qualifications does not guarantee an offer of a place. The University receives more applications than it has places available and the admissions process is therefore competitive. Admissions staff may consider applications on their own merits and in competition with others and may take into account examination results already achieved, predicted grades in forthcoming examinations, research project proposals, personal statements and academic references.

**APPENDIX 3**

**English Language Proficiency**

In the case of candidates whose mother tongue is not English the following qualifications may be acceptable as evidence of proficiency in English. The equivalences relate to the closest comparability to a GCSE grade C. Courses with a high literary content may wish to ask for higher grades.

Cambridge English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
First Certificate of English (FCE)
Not normally accepted by City for Undergraduate study though some Foundation Courses may take grade B or better
Certificate in Advanced English
Grade C or better (NQF Level 2)
Certificate of Proficiency in English
Grade C or better (NQF Level 3)
Business English Certificate
Not normally accepted by City for Undergraduate study though some Foundation courses may take grade B or better
Business English Certificate Higher
Grade C or better (NQF Level 2)
Certificate in English Language Skills
This is a combination of reading, listening, oral interaction and writing certificates. Higher Level (NQF 2) with Pass or Pass with Merit would be acceptable. Vantage Level (NQF 1) would not normally be accepted by City apart from Foundation courses.
Cambridge International Examinations (CIE)
GCE O Level English Language Syllabus (Syllabus numbers 1120, 1123, 1124, 1125, 1126)
Grade C or better
IGCSE First Language English (Syllabus number 0500)
Grade C or better
IGCSE English as a second language
Grade C or better
City and Guilds and Pitman Qualifications
English for Business Communication
Level 2 First Class Pass or Level 3 Pass for more linguistically exacting courses
ESOL and Spoken ESOL
Higher Intermediate Level (NQF Level 2)
Edexcel
International GCE O Level English Language
Grade C or better
International Test of English – Advanced
Recognised by most UK HEIs for entry to UG study
International Test of English – Proficient
Indicates a high level of competency and can allow admission for PG study
IGCSE English Language
Grade C or better
Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination: Use of English
Grade E or better
International English Language Testing System
Most UK Higher Education Institutions require an overall score of 6.0 for Undergraduate study. Candidates will receive a band score for each of the following skill areas: reading, writing, speaking, listening.
London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI)
English for Business (EFB)
Pass at Level 3
English for Commerce (EFC)
Pass at Level 3
Spoken English for Industry and Commerce (SEFIC)
Pass at Level 3
English Language Skills Assessment (ELSA) Reading and Listening Test Score of 383/500
Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB)
A score of 80 or above will suffice for UG study. A score of 90 or above should be asked for courses with a high literary content.
NEAB University Entrance Test in English for Speakers of Other Languages (UETESOL)
Pass required. This is graded on a scale of A to D. This examination has now been discontinued. It was last awarded in 2002 so applicant presenting this qualification may be required to take another proficiency test.
Oxford
ARELS Examination (Higher Level)
Credit or Distinction (Last awarded 2001)
Examination in English as a foreign language (Higher Level)
Trinity
ESOL
Acceptable at grade 10 or above as evidence of spoken English
Integrated Skills Test in English (ISE)
Level III or above
University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES)
Certificate of Communicative Skills in English (CCSE)
Last awarded 2001. A combination of reading, writing, listening and oral interaction at Level 3 or above.
In addition to the formal qualifications listed above the university will also consider, as evidence of proficiency:
A first degree from a UK university or from the CNAA
A first degree from an overseas institution recognised by the university as providing adequate evidence of proficiency in the English Language (for example from institutions in Australia, Canada or the USA)
Applicants who do not meet any of the above but have undertaken at least one year of post-18 education delivered in the English Language may considered for exemption from the universities requirements at the discretion of the school and normally following an interview. Where applicable, applicants will be notified at the point of the offer of the arrangements for any pre-sessional English language training they must complete, to a satisfactory standard, before commencing study. The admission of such applicants is subject to approval by the Admissions Tutor.

APPENDIX 4

Procedure for the investigation of a Criminal Conviction

Applicants for both Undergraduate and Postgraduate courses are required to declare whether they have any criminal convictions. This excludes motoring offences that received a fine/three penalty points or a spent sentence as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (however see below for guidance on health courses.) The university has a responsibility and duty of care to ensure that an applicant’s criminal conviction will not:
- present a clear and present threat to the safety of other staff and students
- constitute a direct or unacceptable abuse of the subject concerned
- contravene the government regulations relating to courses which involve working with children or vulnerable adults. For these courses there is a legal requirement to investigate all convictions including spent sentences and cautions.

Procedure for investigating a criminal conviction
The following procedures below have been adopted and must be followed in all cases:

- Undergraduate and Postgraduate applications must be checked by the School admissions staff upon receipt.
- If an applicant has not completed this section of the form, the School admissions staff should, using a standard letter, request the information from the applicant in writing.
- If an applicant has declared a past criminal conviction, or if the applicant is applying while serving time, the Schools admissions staff are to consider whether they would accept the applicant, at this stage, purely on their academic merits. If the answer is 'Reject' then this decision should be transmitted and no correspondence sent.
- If the School wishes to make either a Conditional or Unconditional offer, then the standard investigating letter, available from the Central Admissions Office, should be sent but the School should not under any circumstances communicate with the applicant to state that an offer has been made. It is essential that the applicant is given consideration prior to an academic offer.

The letter will include legally worded information explaining our duty of care, the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, the Criminal Records Bureau, the confidentiality of information, etc. The letter will state that serious consideration is being given to the application but that we wish to have further information before deciding if an offer is to be made. (It should be noted that, although many applicants apply for more than one course at the same institution, only one letter should be sent out. Information on the conviction will be circulated to other Schools only if they are intending to make an offer and not prior to the decision.) Any documentation received from the applicant will be referred in the first instance to the Head of the School concerned, for an initial assessment. If the offence is not considered to pose a problem or threat to the School, then the application should be referred to the Central Admissions Office who will consult a general University panel. If the university does not wish to admit the applicant then an appropriately worded letter will be issued.

If the applicant refuses the information or fails to respond by a given deadline then the University reserves the right to reject.

It should be noted that any information relating to a criminal conviction is highly confidential and must not be divulged to any party not directly involved in the admissions procedure.

**APPENDIX 5**

Guidelines on Fee Status Assessment

School admissions staff will be responsible for the determination of applicant fee status for the purpose of tuition fee payments.

The level of tuition fees a student will pay is governed by the Education (Fees and Awards) Act 1983.

The regulations within that act define which students must not be charged fees at the higher rate: that is any student who meets the eligibility of the requirements. These students are usually referred to as 'home' students. The regulations also allow institutions to discriminate against students who do not meet the eligibility requirements by charging them the higher fee. These students are usually referred to as 'overseas' students.

The following distinction should be noted in relation to the above paragraph. Institutions which discriminate against students on the basis of the regulations are
protected from prosecution under the Race Relations Act 1976. However an institution which charges the ‘overseas’ fee and is subsequently judged to have done so in contradiction of the regulations may be considered to have discriminated against that student under this Act.

It is Government policy that ‘overseas’ students generally should not be subsidised from public money, but should be expected to meet the full cost of their study in the United Kingdom. As such the university must take seriously its commitment to apply the law in a fair, equitable and above all consistent way from School to School and from academic year to academic year. It is the responsibility to confirm the bona fides of applicants claiming a specific immigration status in order to support the commitment mentioned above.

Any concessions to remit or charge the lower fee are the responsibility of the institution and are to its own financial cost (see Asylum Seekers and families of UK-based members of Diplomatic Missions in section 3.)

Assessing an applicant's fee status – this is carried out in full compliance with the guidance and advice of the UK Council for International Student Affairs - http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/

Principles of Good Practice

When making fee assessments the University must:

- Be mindful of the Equal Opportunities Policy/Race Relations Act and the concept of Discrimination
- Check all relevant bona fides at the earliest possible stage
- Have clear communication at the earliest possible stage of the outcome of the decision and the costs involved
- Have clear communication of the right of appeal both internally and externally
- Have procedures and policies that are agreed by and communicated to all staff
- Have procedures and policies that are applied fairly and evenly to all students
- Have procedures and policies that do not unnecessarily compromise the integrity of the system
- Have procedures and policies that do not compromise financial accountability
- Incorporate a degree of flexibility
- Have clear contractual deadlines on the payment of fees

Following a review of Admissions Procedures the new University Admissions Office and concurrent processes and procedures will commence on 1\textsuperscript{st} August 2012. This guidance will be updated on 1\textsuperscript{st} October 2012 to take account of these changes.