

Admissions Policy



1. Our Aims

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 The University is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities for all and our equality and diversity policy can be found online at: <https://www.bathspa.ac.uk/about-us/governance/policies/equality-policy/>
- 1.3 The University's long-term commitment to supporting care experienced young people as they explore their opportunities has been reaffirmed through the signing of the Care Leaver Covenant (see mycovenant.org.uk). This commitment means that the University is proud to offer advice, financial support and on course support to encourage care leavers to consider higher education and to thrive when there. For more information see www.bathspa.ac.uk/students/student-wellbeing-services/care-leavers-estranged-students-and-carers/
- 1.4 Our admissions policies and practices are designed to be consistent and transparent, through which all applicants are treated fairly and given prompt attention in compliance with appropriate legislation including our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.
- 1.5 All University staff involved in selection and admissions are familiar with the underlying principles outlined in this policy. This extends to staff in Educational Partnership institutions responsible for selection decisions and to third party representatives undertaking recruitment activity on behalf of the University, such as agents based in the UK and overseas.

2. Principles

- 2.1 This policy aims to:
 - Adhere to the principles of fair admission and equality of opportunity
 - Operate a process for the consideration of applications that is timely, consistent, transparent, equitable and fair
 - Ensure that those involved in decision making are suitably qualified and supported
 - Provide assurance that there is demonstrable evidence that all students admitted to the University have the potential to thrive in their selected course of study

- Comply with all relevant legislation and regulatory requirements
- Provide accurate and accessible information to applicants to enable them to make informed choices
- Ensure continuous improvement in admissions practice, procedures and systems
- Review the outcomes from this policy, from applicant feedback and admission appeals on a regular basis and implement improvements as a result.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This Policy sets out our approach, our responsibilities and those of our applicants. It relates to applications for all modes and levels of study at the University. Admission to courses offered in collaboration with Educational Partners will follow the same principles and broadly our standard operating procedures. The expectation is that every effort will be made to ensure consistency between the University and our educational partnerships. Please see section 25 for more information.

4. Sector Best Practice

- 4.1 This Policy takes note of best practice within the Higher Education sector including the UK Quality Code for HE: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access and Participation and the UUK & Guild HE Fair Admissions Code of Practice. It is also framed with reference to commitments to fair access and student success as set out within the Higher Education and Research Act 2017, Consumer and Markets Authority guidance, the Office for Students (OfS) regulatory framework, equalities legislation and data protection requirements.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1 Admission to Bath Spa University is solely at the discretion of the University. All applications and enrolments with educational partners are approved by the University in collaboration with Educational Partners except where agreed otherwise by BSU.
- 5.2 Responsibility for oversight of and changes to our Admissions Policy rests with the University's Academic Board. Annual reviews are coordinated by the Director of Student Recruitment and Marketing and involve liaison with key stakeholder groups including our academic schools and professional services.

- 5.3 The PVC Academic Planning Is responsible for ensuring that:
- Admissions processes and policies are clear, transparent, and adhered to
 - Admissions policies are subject to regular review; with the outcomes leading to enhancement in practice
- 5.4 The University's Future Students section is under the direction of the Director of Student Recruitment & Marketing and is responsible for:
- University's Admissions and Applicant Support teams
 - UK and International Student Recruitment and Outreach
 - Marketing and Applicant Communications
 - Portfolio and Planning
- 5.5 These teams work together to provide future student-centred functions, services and activities to deliver the University's student recruitment priorities, the development of activities in support of our Access and Participation Plan and the overall Admissions strategy of the University.
- 5.6 The Heads of Admissions and Applicant Support are responsible for ensuring that:
- Admissions staff are aware of and support the University's commitment to clarity and transparency;
 - Admissions staff work to appropriate professional standards and follow the principles set out in this policy;
 - Admissions staff are fully supported, trained and provided with continuing professional development opportunities in relation to their respective professional roles.

6. Admissions Criteria and Selection

General Entry Requirements

- 6.1 The University welcomes applications from students who demonstrate the appropriate potential, qualifications and/or experience to succeed. Courses may have general and subject-specific requirements, details of which can be found in the Typical Offers section of our online course pages. We accept a wide range of alternative UK qualifications, please contact the Admissions and Applicant Support Teams if your qualification is not listed.
- 6.2 European and international qualifications are also welcome and information on acceptable qualifications can be found on our Country Pages www.bathspa.ac.uk/students/international/country-advice/

We evaluate international qualifications and institutions by referring to independently published guides such as UK ENIC. Some selection decisions may consider where you have studied as well as the qualification and your level of attainment within it. Guidance on specific circumstances is available from the Admissions and Applicant Support Team.

- 6.3 Candidates may, in special cases, be granted exemption from the course requirement if recommended by a course leader as having reached the necessary entrance standard to enable them to start on the course for which they have applied. This would usually be assessed by interview or assessment of a piece of written work or portfolio, as outlined in the APL Policy below.
- 6.4 The University reserves the right, at its discretion, to admit any applicant who fails to meet the published Typical Offer but demonstrates the potential to thrive at the University.

Clearing Entry Requirements (undergraduate applicants only)

- 6.5 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.

English Language Entry Requirements

- 6.6 Applicants whose first language is not English¹ will need to provide evidence of English proficiency to demonstrate that you will be able to succeed in your studies. This could be met in two ways:
- Via an approved English language test or alternative qualification listed at: www.bathspa.ac.uk/how-to-apply/international/english-language-requirements
 - Successfully completing an English Language Pre-Sessional course at Bath Spa's English Language Unit at the required level before starting your academic course www.bathspa.ac.uk/students/international/pre-sessional
- 6.7 The Admissions and Applicant Support Teams can also advise on variations or exemptions we may be able to offer in individual cases.
- 6.8 Our English Language requirements are listed on our course pages and those of our Educational Partners and are listed in terms of IELTS requirements or equivalent qualification. Our typical English Language requirement for Undergraduate courses is IELTS 5.5 for foundation year entry and IELTS 6.0 or equivalent for entry to Year 1, unless otherwise agreed. For Postgraduate courses the IELTS requirements ranges from IELTS 6.0 to 7.0 or equivalent, depending on the type of course.
- 6.9 International applicants may also be required to undertake a short Test of English at registration to assess whether you might benefit from additional free

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa/knowledge-of-english>

English Language support and to help inform the English Language policy on the acceptability of alternative English language tests and qualifications.

Other Conditions of Admission

- 6.10 For courses which involve interaction with children and/or vulnerable adults, the University will require applicants to pass an enhanced disclosure check via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before registration.
- 6.11 The following 2 steps must be completed for all applicants for Teacher Training courses:
- The applicant must complete a “Fitness to Train to Teach” assessment prior to registration. This is to enable the University to meet statutory requirements and make well-informed decisions about your fitness to train to teach. You also need to inform us at interview stage about any specific needs so the University can consider any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary and ensure that all agreed adjustments and support are in place before the beginning of your course. More information can be found at: www.bathspa.ac.uk/how-to-apply/teacher-training/fitness-to-train-to-teach/.
 - The University will complete a Prohibition List Check. Prohibition List checks are conducted after an offer to determine applicants’ suitability for qualified teacher status. The check looks to establish any previous unacceptable conduct, relevant conviction or where an act may bring the profession into disrepute. This will be conducted automatically by the University, and you will be informed if you have not met this requirement. This check is done in addition to a DBS check, both of which are DFE requirements for an Initial Teacher Training (ITT) course.
- 6.12 The detailed entrance requirements for each course (in the relevant prospectus or on the online course web pages) indicate whether any of these conditions apply. You will also be advised of these additional conditions in an offer of a place.

7. Widening Access and Participation and Contextual Admissions

- 7.1 Bath Spa University is committed to widening access and participation to higher education and aims to encourage and support a diverse student population. The UK Student Recruitment and Outreach team works collaboratively with schools, colleges and community groups in Bath and North East Somerset and Wiltshire and the surrounding regions. We deliver a targeted and structured programme of activities for young people – from primary school age to post-16 and adults - to support their progression to higher education.

7.2 We operate contextual admissions² as follows for our undergraduate provision in Bath:

- We aim to support applicants from all backgrounds and we therefore aim to understand their individual circumstances. In order to do this, we use information from applications to consider the applicant's background and the impact this may have had on them and on their qualifications. Using this information, we look to support the applicant in their application to study with us and to continue supporting them through their studies and into future employment.
- Any applicant to our Bath based undergraduate provision (not including partner provision) who meets one or more of the following criteria is eligible for contextual admissions:
 - IMD4 Quintile 1 or 2
 - Free School Meals
 - Carer
 - Service family background
 - Care experienced
 - Mature student
 - Refugee
 - Estranged student
 - You live with one or more of the following conditions:
 - Social/communication impairment: Asperger's/Autism
 - Blind or have a serious visual impairment
 - Deaf or have a serious hearing impairment
 - Longstanding illness or health condition
 - Mental health condition – depression, schizophrenia
 - Specific learning difficulty – dyslexia, dyspraxia
 - Physical impairment or mobility issues
 - Disability, impairment or medical condition not listed
 - Development condition that you have had since childhood which affects motor, cognitive, social and emotional skills, and speech and language
- Applicants are not required to request Contextual Admissions: an automated process operated by Admissions will identify eligibility from the application. Admissions will then inform eligible applicants about next steps.
- Interventions may include one or more of the following:
 - Discounted offer (a one or two grade discount on our standard entry tariff).
 - Support for transition into higher education (such as workshops or summer schools)

² Contextual Admission will only be applied for applications received from the 1st September 2024 for programmes taught by BSU; excluding provision delivered at partners and BSUL. The APL policy is used to apply contextual admissions for BSUL and partners

- A Travel Contribution Scheme to reimburse applicants for a contribution to their travel costs to attend an Offer Holder Day, interview or audition.
- Targeted on-course support.

8. The Application Process

Application Routes

8.1 There are two main application routes for the majority of university courses:

- UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) for applicants from the UK applying for full-time degree courses: www.ucas.com
- Directly to the University: for applicants for postgraduate courses (except ITT), some applications to our partner institutions and non-UK applications for undergraduate courses.

Exceptions:

- For all UK students regardless of nationality or domicile, postgraduate Teacher Training (ITT) applications should be made through the Department for Education's Apply system. www.gov.uk/apply-for-teacher-training.

8.2 All applications received by the relevant published deadline will be given equal consideration (e.g. late January for home undergraduate courses). Some courses, particularly at partner institutions, have multiple entry points across the year all of which will be clearly advertised.

8.3 If an application is received after the relevant deadline and the course is full it may be rejected or considered for the next available intake.

Multiple Applications

8.4 We are happy to consider applicants who wish to apply for more than one course, where allowed within the relevant application route. For example, you can apply for up to five courses via UCAS and multiple courses using the University's direct application form.

Selection

8.5 The University is committed to providing a fair and professional admissions operation and has a centralised Admissions and Applicant Support Team in place to achieve this. All applicants for a course are considered by specialist admissions and applicant support staff against the same admissions criteria. 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 Director of Student Recruitment & Marketing and the Pro Vice Chancellor Academic Planning.

- 8.6 Where places are limited, we offer places to those candidates who best meet our selection criteria and whom admissions selectors judge to have the most potential to benefit from their chosen course.
- 8.7 Methods of assessing applications vary between courses and may include prior and predicted academic achievement, references, personal or supporting statements, interview or audition and research proposals. We may also consider any exceptional individual circumstances or barriers to learning e.g. extended illness, where this information is included in an application.
- 8.8 Where courses require interviews, auditions, additional written work or portfolios as part of their selection criteria we will make this clear in the course pages in the prospectus and online. This will also include details on how the selection will be conducted and the criteria used to select successful candidates. Arrangements for interviews, auditions and submitting additional written work will take account of details of any medical, special or cultural needs and any reasonable adjustments. Selection using interview, audition or portfolios is undertaken by the Course Leader or specialist academic staff with expertise in the subject area.
- 8.9 Bath Spa University does not use undergraduate admissions tests (as defined by UCAS) nor does it consider A level unit grades when making admissions decisions. We are happy to consider applicants who re-take part, or all, of a qualification and/or who have made previous applications to the University.

9. Admission Decisions

Admissions Decisions

- 9.1 If you have applied through UCAS we will communicate our decision through the official channels of UCAS, but the formal Offer, including the full Terms and Conditions, will be sent direct to you.
- 9.2 If you have applied direct to the University, a formal decision will be made and communicated to you in writing (via email) by the relevant Admissions and Applicant Support staff.
- 9.3 An Offer, whether conditional or unconditional, will be made in good faith taking into account information supplied by you, anyone acting on your behalf, and your referee.
- 9.4 If you have applied to one of our Educational Partners you will receive confirmation from them that a place is available, but the formal offer including the full Terms and Conditions and which requires acceptance by you, will be sent direct to you by the University.

10. Types of Offer

10.1 The University makes two types of offers:

Unconditional Offer - This means that there are no academic conditions attached to your offer of a place on the course. In general, it is used when applicants have already met the entry requirements for the course including our English Language entry requirements where applicable. It can also be used when applicants have passed a robust selection process including a portfolio assessment, an interview or an audition. Holders of unconditional offers may still need to meet non-academic requirements such as providing a DBS certificate or passing a Fitness to Train to Teach assessment.

Conditional Offer - A conditional offer is used when applicants have to meet certain criteria before their place can be confirmed on a course. It is generally used when applicants are still working towards the qualifications required for entry to the course. If an applicant is studying three A Levels and has applied to join an undergraduate course, the admissions conditional offer will be to achieve certain grades from those A Levels, eg. BBC. Or, if an applicant has applied for a postgraduate course, but is yet to complete their first degree, a conditional offer would be made requiring the applicant to pass the degree with a particular classification before their place could be confirmed, eg. achieve a 2:2. Conditions could also include the provision of a reference, an immigration status or of previously achieved qualification certificates. Each offer will detail what is required.

10.2 Accepting an offer of a place

Depending on your method of application, you should accept your offer as follows:

- Applications via UCAS – the offer should be accepted via UCAS as either the firm (first) or insurance (backup) choice
- Direct applications – offers should be accepted direct with the University as outlined in the offer letter
- Initial Teacher Training (ITT) - the offer should be accepted via the Department for Education's Apply system
- Applications via Educational Partners – the formal offer including the full terms and conditions should be accepted with the University.

10.3 Inappropriate conduct

The University takes the conduct of its applicants very seriously. Any communication by applicants with either staff, students and/or other applicants (including social media posts), that is deemed hostile, aggressive or otherwise inappropriate and/or which brings the University into disrepute, (whether it is expressed verbally or in writing), may result in action being taken by the University. Where such action is taken, it will normally result in a formal warning

being issued in first instance. However, if the case is deemed to be particularly serious, the University may decide to withdraw an offer which it has made or reject an application. Conduct which may constitute a criminal offence will normally be referred to the relevant authorities.

- 10.4 By accepting the offer of a place, you will be entering into a contract with Bath Spa University on the basis of the terms and conditions set out in your offer and in the University's Terms and Conditions.

- [Standard Terms and Conditions:](#)

11. Cancellation Policy

- 11.1 After accepting an offer of a place, you will have a 14 day cancellation period within which you can cancel your acceptance without giving any reason; and any deposit or administration or other fees they have paid will normally be refunded in full. For more details see the [University's Study Terms and Conditions](#)

12. Confirmation of Results

- 12.1 'Confirmation' refers to the period each year when the University receives examination and other results for applicants who have accepted Conditional offers. If you achieve the requirements of your Conditional offer, your place will be automatically confirmed.
- 12.2 If you have not met the required grades exactly, we will review your application again and your place may be confirmed if space is available or we may make you an offer on an alternative programme. You will be notified of this via email and/or text message and, if you applied via UCAS, it will also appear in your UCAS online application. When an alternative offer is made you are under no obligation to accept it and, should you decline, you will either be released to your insurance choice or into UCAS clearing.
- 12.3 The Confirmation procedure for most undergraduate candidates involves receiving and processing electronic data from UCAS which, in turn, receives and processes electronic results data from the examination boards. The University reserves the right to amend the offer in light of an electronic error.
- 12.4 The Confirmation procedure for postgraduate and international candidates involves writing to previous institutions for details of degree or other results, verifying English Language results via online verification services and writing to referees. If we are unable to obtain this information from your previous institution or awarding body we will write to you to request that the relevant documentation is provided.

13. Withdrawn applications

13.1 An application may be withdrawn either by an applicant or by the University.

The University will only withdraw an application where necessary. The instances where the University may withdraw an application include, but are not limited to:

- when an applicant has not responded to requests for additional information to support their application
- where applicants who are required to attend an interview or audition as part of the application process do not attend, or if they are unable to attend and an alternative date cannot reasonably be found
- when false or misleading information has been provided in support of an application
- when the course has been closed or suspended

13.2 Applicants who wish to withdraw their application before an offer has been made should contact UCAS or the Admissions and Applicant Services Team, depending on the method of application. Applicants should decline their offer if they have not yet accepted it. Applicants who wish to withdraw from the course after accepting their offer should follow the process outlined in section 11 Cancellation Policy.

14. Evidence and verification of qualifications and supporting information

14.1 The University reserves the right to request evidence of any qualification listed on the application form. Any information provided by applicants or anyone acting on their behalf may be verified for accuracy by the University or representatives at our Educational Partners, including qualifications, references and previous work or study. Applicants who fail to provide evidence within 28 days of the initial request may have their application rejected or withdrawn.

15. False or misleading information

15.1 The University expects applicants, and anyone acting on their behalf, to provide full, honest and accurate information on their application form and in all subsequent conversations with the University, its agents and educational partnership providers. Applicants should not omit any requested or relevant

information, make any misrepresentation (for example, through plagiarism) or give false information at any point of the application process, including after an offer is made. Should this occur the University reserves the right to cancel an application, withdraw an offer of a place and/or revoke registration should the information come to light after the start of term.

- 15.2 We realise that AI tools are already reshaping the way we work and will become integral to many careers.

A personal statement. If the University finds that a personal statement, APEL submission or any other part of the application has been written using generative AI, we'll consider this **plagiarism**, and **your application may be rejected**.

The University's AI policy can be viewed in full here - [AI Policy](#)

16. Communications

- 16.1 The University is committed to ensuring that all communication with applicants is timely, informative and conducted in a professional, courteous and respectful manner.
- 16.2 We may contact applicants where information is missing or unclear, which prevents us making a decision on an application. This will usually be via email. In cases where applicants do not respond, the application will be placed on hold for a maximum of 28 days (or any deadline set by UCAS). We reserve the right to withdraw any applicant who does not respond satisfactorily to requests for information or clarification by the relevant deadline.
- 16.3 Applicants through UCAS will receive their decisions through their UCAS online account and applicants who applied directly to the University will receive their decision via email.

17. Information for applicants in specific circumstances

Admission of minors

- 17.1 The University will consider applications from candidates who will be under the age of 18 at the time of commencing study at Bath Spa University and will be approaching their 18 birthday soon after starting. Applications are considered on their merits, and an offer may be made to candidates who will be under 18 at the time of commencement of study, if it is evidenced that the candidate has the potential, intellect and academic ability to successfully complete the relevant programme of study. The University may exceptionally

consider an application from a candidate aged between 16 and 18 years of age and this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

- 17.2 Once an applicant has firmly accepted their offer (on UCAS or via email if a direct application). The offer-holder and their parent/s or legal guardian are required to complete the 'Under 18 Consent Form'. A letter with a link to the form is automatically sent and managed by the Student Registry Compliance and Safeguarding team and must be completed.
- 17.3 The full University Policy and Procedure for students Under 18 can be found here [Policy and Procedure for Students Under 18](#). Further advice for International/EU applicants can be found here [Guardianship Advice](#)

Applicants with disabilities

- 17.4 The University welcomes applications from students with disabilities and/or additional support needs. If you declare a disability your application will be considered according to the same principles as for other candidates, then after an offer has been made you will be sent a questionnaire from Student Wellbeing Services requesting information about the nature of your condition and any support requirements. This is to ensure that the University is able to put into place any additional support and make any reasonable adjustments including completion of Academic Access Plan, which may be required in time for the start of your course. If you choose not to tell us about your disability, provide this information with short notice before the course start, or do not provide the full information before the start of the course, we will do our best to help you, but we may not be able to provide the full range of support which might otherwise be available or there may be a delay in providing that support.

Applicants with criminal convictions

- 17.5 Bath Spa University seeks to attract students 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 including those who may have criminal convictions. In this context, a criminal record will not automatically prevent admission to the University.
- 17.6 We ask applicants to disclose the details of relevant previous offences so the University may assess whether, and to what extent, this may affect the safety and wellbeing of staff, students, visitors and others using our services or facilities and/or someone's suitability for a course. Having a conviction will not necessarily bar you from a place on their chosen course. This will depend on the course and the circumstances and background to the offence(s).

- 17.7 Applicants for Initial Teacher Training (ITT) courses will be asked to complete an enhanced DBS check and a Prohibition List check as part of their conditions of registration and, if the DBS enhanced check disclosure shows a criminal conviction or caution, the case will be referred to the University's Criminal Conviction Panel for consideration.
- 17.8 Applicants for other courses will be asked to disclose any "unspent" convictions which are considered "relevant" after accepting an offer of a place. Relevant convictions are those which have implications for universities' duty of care towards the safety of their students, staff and visitors. This includes convictions involving violence, sexual offences and supply of drugs; as well as offences involving firearms, arson, terrorism and harassment. Applicants for other courses are not required to tell us about 'spent' convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- 17.9 If the case requires further consideration, the Head of Admissions and Applicant Support will take the case to the University's Criminal Conviction Panel made up of senior representatives from the relevant academic school, Student Wellbeing Services and Student and Registry Services for administrative support.
- 17.10 Using the information provided the panel will assess the risk to other students, staff and others with whom the applicant may come into contact and University property taking into account:
- The nature of the offence(s) and whether it is relevant to the course
 - How long ago the offence(s) took place and whether there has been any reoffending
 - The recommendations of any referees, any mitigating circumstances, and aggravating circumstances
 - The University's [Safeguarding Policy and Procedure](#)
- 17.11 Depending on the assessment of the risks associated with the conviction, the decision of the Criminal Convictions Panel would normally be one of the following:
- The existing offer will be unaffected and no further non-academic conditions will be attached. The applicant will be free to join the course, as long as any outstanding conditions are met;
 - The academic offer will be unaffected but additional non-academic conditions will be attached (eg. a student contract specifying any limitations to be imposed);
 - Withdrawal of offer, or change of course - if the conviction is not compatible with the course originally applied for

17.12 Any applicant who receives a caution or conviction after applying and before the date of registration with the University should inform the Admissions and Applicant Support Team without delay.

17.13 For more details, see the [Policy and Procedures for Applicants Declaring a Criminal Conviction](#)

Applicants seeking deferred entry

17.14 The University generally welcomes applications from students who intend to defer their entry for a year (a gap year). However, there are a small number of courses which do not allow deferred entry because of the limited number of places available. These currently include Initial Teacher Training (ITT) courses.

17.15 If you wish to defer, you should write to the Admissions and Applicant Support Team. The majority of deferral requests are granted, however, the University retains the right to not run a course in future years, and an agreement to defer does not guarantee that the course will be offered in the subsequent year.

17.16 We will normally consider one request for deferred entry. If you wish to defer for a second time you may be asked to submit a new application.

Requests for late entry

17.17 The University will only consider applications for courses that have already begun in exceptional circumstances and in any case not normally after two weeks of teaching have passed. Late entry to taught courses will require approval of the course leader in conjunction with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Academic Planning and late entry to research programmes will require approval of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research and Enterprise and Director of Studies.

Applicants wishing to reapply

17.18 The Admissions and Applicant Support Teams will decide whether to consider a re-application on a case-by-case basis and it should not be assumed that they will always consider a re-application. The University reserves its right to draw upon information from previous applications (including correspondence, personal statements, references and performance at interview) or information from any previous period of registration at the University when assessing your suitability for a course.

17.19 If you have previously studied at Bath Spa University and wish to apply for a different course, please contact the Admissions and Applicant Support Team to discuss the possibility of a reapplication.

18. Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

18.1 The Accreditation of Prior Learning is the assessment and acknowledgement of the full range of an individual's skills, competencies, knowledge and work

ethos obtained through informal training, certificated learning, non-accredited courses, workshops, work and life experience.

18.2 At Bath Spa University APL can be used to grant:

- admission to year 1 (or normal start) of a course if you do not meet our minimum entry requirements
- admission with advanced standing to year 2 or 3 of a degree
- claiming credit or exemption for particular course modules

18.3 Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) can relate to learning which is either experiential or certificated:

Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) is the process by which the University formally recognises prior learning gained through previous experience, including employment (paid or unpaid), self-study or leisure activities.

Applicants who wish to be considered under the APEL policy will be asked to complete the University's standard APL form outlining their previous experience and how it relates to the course (and any specific modules that are applying for exemption). The application will be considered by the course leader and senior Admissions manager, who will communicate the outcome of the APEL application to the applicant.

Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) is the process by which the University formally recognises learning that has been assessed and certified by another education or training provider.

Applicants who wish to be considered under the APCL policy should supply full details as part of their application and may also be asked to complete the standard APL form. The previous learning must be relevant to the course for which you are applying, no more than 5 years "old" and can only be accepted if the subject matter 'maps' onto the relevant core and/or optional modules. If successful, the credit will count towards your course of study. The University will not consider applications on the basis of prior accreditation for Initial Teacher Training (ITT) courses.

More information on the University's APL policy, including the maximum number of credits which can be recognised for different courses, can be found online [here](#)

19. International Students

19.1 In order to comply with the relevant United Kingdom legislation, our admissions policy and processes must ensure that all applicants are in a position to meet all of the UK visa requirements for the anticipated full duration of their programme of study.

- 19.2 All non-UK national students are required to evidence their 'Right to Study' status or that they hold the correct visa prior to registration.

Applicants requiring a student visa to study in the UK

- 19.3 The University may choose to request that international certificates and transcripts are verified with the issuing authority. A third-party verification service may be requested to conduct these checks. Any costs will be covered by the University.

Applicants who require sponsorship under the Student Route to study in the UK, will need to satisfy several requirements set by the UK Home Office ahead of receiving a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) required for the visa application.

- 19.4 Applicants may be required to provide evidence of meeting the UK Home Office requirements ahead of sponsorship under the Student Route. This may require an applicant to undertake an online credibility interview carried out by an academic professional and to provide financial evidence to demonstrate meeting the financial requirements of the Student Route as set out by [Appendix Student of the Immigration Rules](#).
- 19.5 When assessing an applicant's eligibility to undertake a proposed course of study, the Admissions Team will determine how long the applicant has previously spent studying in the UK under the Student Route (including time spent studying in the UK with a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa). The assessment will ensure the maximum time-limit for studying in the UK with a Student Visa will not be exceeded by further sponsorship under the Student Route.
- 19.6 If an applicant requires a student visa to study in the UK but will not be eligible for a visa to study on their course, we will not be able to offer the applicant a study place.
- 19.7 If a place has already been offered at the point we become aware of the applicant's ineligibility for a student visa, we will withdraw our offer.
- 19.8 Unconditional offer holders who meet the requirements under the Student Route and have paid the non-refundable CAS deposit as detailed in the offer letter, will typically be issued with a CAS up to 6 months before the course start date.
- 19.9 CASs are valid for 6 months from the date of issue.
- 19.10 More information on the CAS process for International applicants can be found at: www.bathspa.ac.uk/students/international/visas-and-immigration/student-visas/cas/

20 ATAS Clearance

- 20.1 Some of our courses fall within a list of subjects which require Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) clearance. If you require ATAS clearance it will be mentioned in your offer letter. The university will not issue your CAS until we have received a copy of your ATAS certificate, so you are advised to make your ATAS application allowing sufficient time to apply your visa.

21. Feedback, appeals and complaints

- 21.1 All unsuccessful decisions are communicated to applicants together with the reason for the decision. Detailed feedback will be provided to unsuccessful applicants if it is requested within 10 working days of the decision being processed.
- 21.2 The University's aim is to consider all applications fairly and equitably. If you are dissatisfied with the way your application has been handled in accordance with this policy, you should submit a complaint in writing to the Head of Admissions and Applicant Support, who will seek to reply to your complaint within 14 days. If, after this, you are still concerned you may use the Complaints and Appeals Policy for Applicants which can be found online at: (link to be provided once the policy has been updated).

22. University use of applicant data

- 22.1 The information contained in your application will be used primarily for the purpose of processing your application and creating your student record. This information will also be used to make statutory returns to bodies such as the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). In certain circumstances the University may also need to share your data with a third party external organisation in order to reach a decision on, or progress your application. In such circumstances we are committed to protecting your data in accordance with all relevant data protection legislation.
- 22.2 Our Privacy Policy for Applicants and Students provides full information about how and why we process, use and, where necessary, share the personal data you provide to us as an applicant, and how we protect it: www.bathspa.ac.uk/about-us/governance/policies/privacy-for-students-and-applicants/

23. Responsibility of applicants in the admission process

- 23.1 It is your responsibility to ensure that your application is complete and accurate and to notify the University of any changes or amendments to your application.
- 23.2 If you provide new information which means that the circumstances upon which your offer was made are changed, your offer may be amended or, in exceptional circumstances, withdrawn
- 23.3 At the point of registration the University will check that all new students have the right to study in the UK. It will be the responsibility of applicants to ensure that they hold the necessary evidence, such as a passport or other government-issued ID.
- 23.4 The University takes the conduct of its applicants very seriously. Any communication by applicants with either staff, students and/or other applicants (including social media posts), that is deemed hostile, aggressive or otherwise inappropriate and/or which brings the University into disrepute, (whether it is expressed verbally or in writing), may result in action being taken by the University. Where such action is taken, it will normally result in a formal warning being issued in first instance. However, if the case is deemed to be particularly serious, the University may decide to withdraw an offer which it has made or reject an application. Conduct which may constitute a criminal offence will normally be referred to the relevant authorities.

24. Fees and Deposits

- 24.1 When we receive your application, the University or Educational Partner will make an initial assessment of whether you would be classified as “Home” or “Overseas” for tuition fee purposes based on the information you have provided in your application, in compliance with Home Office guidance. If your fee status is not clear, then the University or Educational Partner will write to you for additional information to support the decision, such as proof of your leave to remain in the UK. You will be notified of your fee status in your offer. If we are unable to obtain the necessary information prior to offer, your offer will be conditional upon assessment of your fee status.
- 24.2 Students are responsible for the payment of their own fees and debts. The University may agree to a request to invoice a third party for any fee or debt (for example the Student Loans Company, a Local Authority, Funding Council or other Sponsor). This does not affect your ultimate responsibility for paying the fee or debt.
- 24.3 To comply with UK Visas and Immigration regulations on the admission of International Students, the University requires International Students to pay a non-refundable deposit towards their tuition fees before they can be issued with the necessary documents to enable them to apply for a student visa to allow them to study in the UK. More information can be found online at: www.bathspa.ac.uk/media/bathspaacuk/international/documents/international-student-deposit-policy.pdf

25. Educational Partner Institutions

- 25.1 All applications and enrolments with educational partners are approved by the University in collaboration with educational partners.
- 25.2 Admission to courses offered in collaboration with Educational Partners will follow the principles outlined in this Policy, including the APL Policy outlined in section 18, but the University's standard operating procedures may differ in some areas.
- 25.3 Educational Partners outside the UK will apply the principles embodied within this Policy, taking account of the national statute, regulation and public policy which applies in their respective countries (for example, the definition of a minor may be at variance with the definition in the UK).
- 25.4 If an applicant for a course offered at one of the University's Educational Partners is dissatisfied with the way their application has been handled in accordance with this policy, they should follow the Educational Partner's complaints and appeals procedures. If, after this, applicants are still concerned they should write to the Head of Admissions and Applicant Support, who will seek to reply to the complaint within 14 days.
- 25.5 More information on our Educational Partnerships can be found at: www.bathspa.ac.uk/about-us/networks/educational-partners/

26. The Use of International and Domestic Agents

- 26.1 The University works with recruitment agents who represent the University in UK (domestic) and non-UK (international) markets. Agents operating in the UK are for the purpose of targeted outreach work to underrepresented student groups, or to facilitate recruitment to specialist courses. International agents offer local marketing expertise and support market access to student recruitment in those territories. All Agents both International and Domestic must adhere to the principles as outlined in Bath Spa University's Agent Management Policy (link).
- 26.2 The Agent Management policy has been developed in accordance with the UK Agent Quality Framework, which includes the [Good Practice Guide for UK Education Agents](#), [National Code of Ethical Practice for UK Education Agents](#) and HE sector good practice.
- 26.3 Once new Agents have been through the University's due diligence process and are onboarded, Bath Spa University will provide training for new agents

and annual training for all agents (including agents used by Educational Partners and Agent Aggregators (agent organisations contracted by the University to manage a network of sub-agents)).

- 26.4 The Head of International Recruitment will be responsible for day-to-day contact with International agents and will monitor and report regularly on agent performance. The Director of Student Recruitment & Marketing and Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor Academic Planning will be responsible for day-to-day contact with the appointed officer at each Education Partners which has oversight of agent performance and will receive reports on agent performance.

- 26.5 Recruitment agents **must maintain the highest standards of ethical business practices** as outlined in the Agent Management Policy (link).

27. Disclaimer

- 27.1 The University makes every reasonable effort to ensure that the information provided in prospectuses, brochures and online is both helpful and accurate as at the date of publication. However, some changes, for example to courses, study location, placement opportunity, facilities or fees may become necessary due to legitimate staffing, financial, regulatory or academic reasons. We will always endeavour to keep any changes to a minimum and to keep prospective students informed appropriately.

28. Suspension, Closure or Amendments to Courses

- 28.1 In some exceptional circumstances it might be necessary for the University to close or suspend courses. This will not normally happen within 5 months of the start of the course. If your course is closed or suspended or if fundamental changes to your course are made after you have accepted your offer, the University will take reasonable steps to give you early notification of the course closure/ those changes and minimise their impact by offering a suitable alternative course (if available and subject to you satisfying the entry requirements for the course) or helping you find an alternative course. You will also be entitled to withdraw from your course and apply for a refund or partial refund of any tuition fees you have paid.

29. Contact

- 29.1 Please contact the Admissions and Applicant Services Team with questions about this Admissions Policy or the admissions process at Bath Spa University: email admissions@bathspa.ac.uk

30. Definitions

‘Educational Partner’: An institution which Bath Spa University works with for the delivery, validation or quality assurance of our courses.

‘Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)’: The assessment and acknowledgement of the full range of an individual's skills, competencies, knowledge and work ethos obtained through informal training, certificated learning, non-accredited courses, workshops, on-the-job and life experience.

‘Admissions and Applicant Services Team’: The department which deals primarily with the assessment of applications to programmes, issuing of offers and verification of qualifications and documents. Bath Spa University operates a centralised admissions process.

‘Applicant’: a person applying to Bath Spa University for admission to a course of study.

‘Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA)’: The government body tasked with strengthening business competition and reducing anti-competitive practices. This body has provided guidance which higher education providers are expected to follow to ensure that students and applicants are treated fairly and lawfully. www.gov.uk/government/organisations/competition-and-markets-authority

‘Conditional offer’: An offer in which there are specific qualifications or grades, or other non-academic requirements, which must be achieved prior to a formal place being offered on the course. Offer conditions will be communicated by UCAS Track or in a formal offer letter.

‘Direct Application’: An application made to the University from International or Postgraduate applicants using the University's online application form.

‘Entry requirements’: The minimum grades, qualifications and competencies required to get a guaranteed place to study on a programme.

‘Firm Acceptance’: In order for a place to be reserved on a programme, applicants must indicate that they would like to accept this offer as their first choice course and institution. This can be done via UCAS Track for UCAS applicants or via email for non UCAS applicants.

‘Insurance acceptance’: Specifically for applicants applying through UCAS, in some cases applicants are given the choice by UCAS to select an Insurance offer as their second choice.

‘International student’: a person from a country outside the United Kingdom

‘Overseas student’: a person who will be required by the University to pay tuition fees at the overseas rate.

‘Postgraduate’: This refers to qualifications and students studying qualifications at a higher level than a degree, e.g. Masters programmes. It can also refer to higher level programmes such as PhDs.

‘UCAS’: This organisation provides a central application service for all applicants to full time undergraduate programmes. Bath Spa University is committed to recruiting all full-time undergraduates through UCAS and abiding by their rules and timelines. Please see www.ucas.com for more information. www.ucas.com

‘Unconditional offer’: An offer made in any case where the applicant has already met all formal requirements for the programme or achieved a suitable high level in exams to have their place confirmed.

‘Undergraduate’: This refers to qualifications and students studying at degree level, e.g. BSc (Hons) and BA (Hons)

Educational Partners may have their own definitions for the purposes of admitting students.

Document Details

Responsible Office: Admissions and Applicant Support

Responsible Officer: Heads of Admissions and Applicant Support

Approving Authority: Academic Board

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Related Policies and Procedures:

Accreditation of Prior Learning

Equality Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Privacy Policy for Applicants and Students

Appeals Procedures

Declaring a Criminal Conviction

Access and Participation Plan

Student Protection Plan

Supersedes: Admissions Policy V3

Next review due: 2026