



# Admissions Policy: Apprenticeships

2023/24

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Version: 13  
Revision date: 28/07/2023  
Document reviewer: Head of Data & Quality

Due for review: 31/07/2024

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## 1. Policy statement

- 1.1 University Centre Quayside (UCQ) aims to ensure equality of opportunity for applicants and for all students in teaching, learning and assessment. We strive to create and maintain a diverse community of students, employers and staff by encouraging access and participation.
- 1.2 UCQ does not accept admission applications through UCAS.
- 1.3 The initial eligibility benchmarks for Apprenticeship Standards is underpinned by the [Education and Skills Funding Agency \(ESFA\) apprenticeship rules of funding](#).
- 1.4 UCQ operates a procedure whereby a student can claim academic credit for relevant previous study or learning experiences, known as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). The RPL Policy (AD-006) can be found on the UCQ website at <https://ucq.ac.uk/policies/>

## 2. Equality and diversity

- 2.1 UCQ is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation, where all members of its community, including those that seek to apply to UCQ, are treated with respect and dignity. UCQ aim to create a culture of diversity within our community, providing a dynamic working and learning environment, where all members are valued for their contribution and individuality.
- 2.2 UCQ are committed to providing equality of opportunity for all, irrespective of:
  - age
  - disability
  - ethnicity (including race, colour and nationality)
  - gender (including gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy or maternity)
  - religion, belief
  - sexual orientation (including civil partnership status)

UCQ's Equality and Diversity Policy is applicable to all applicants, students and staff, the full policy can be found at <https://ucq.ac.uk/policies/>

## 3. Apprenticeship eligibility criteria

- 3.1 UCQ will at all times seek to operate admissions onto the apprenticeship programme in accordance with the [ESFA Apprenticeship Funding Rules](#); this Admissions Policy should be read alongside the ESFA Funding Rules.

To be eligible, the **individual** must:

- 3.1.1 Start their apprenticeship after the last Friday in June of the academic year in which they have their 16th birthday.
- 3.1.2 Be able to complete the apprenticeship within the time they have available.

- 3.1.3 Not be asked to contribute financially to the cost of training, on-programme or end-point assessment. This includes both where the individual has completed the programme successfully and has left the programme early. Costs include any co-investment or additional training and assessment costs, above the funding band, that the employer has paid directly to the main provider where this is part of the agreed apprenticeship.
- 3.1.4 Not use a student loan to pay for their apprenticeship. Where an individual transfers to an apprenticeship from a full-time further education or higher education course, and that course has been funded by a student loan, the loan must be terminated by the individual and UCQ must be satisfied that this has occurred.
- 3.1.5 Not benefit from funding from an employer's apprenticeship service account or government-employer co-investment for any part of their programme where either UCQ or another party claim funding from another government department or agency for the same purpose. This includes any funding for that individual from the European Social Fund, the Education and Skills Funding Agency or Jobcentre Plus.
- 3.1.6 Not benefit from funding for any part of their programme that duplicates training or assessment they have received from any other source.
- 3.1.7 Spend at least 50% of their working hours in England over the duration of the apprenticeship. For working hours to be counted in the 50% limit, they must be regular, planned, and known at the start of the apprenticeship.
- 3.1.8 Have the right to work in England.
- 3.1.9 Have an eligible residency status (information can be found in the residency eligibility section in Annex A of the [ESFA funding rules 2023/2024](#)).

## 3.2 Employment

- 3.2.1 Unless the apprentice is on an alternative English apprenticeship, they must be employed by an employer, an apprenticeship training agency (ATA) or a flexi-job apprenticeship agency (FJAA), under a contract of employment for a period of time which is long enough for them to complete the apprenticeship successfully, including the end-point assessment.
- 3.2.2 The apprentice must also be on the PAYE scheme of the employer declared in the apprenticeship service account.
- 3.2.3 If the apprentice has more than one employer at any one time (e.g. two part-time job roles), then only one of these employers can be used for the purposes of the apprenticeship. This is so that the party undertaking the role of 'employer' in the apprenticeship is clear.
- 3.2.4 The apprentice will ordinarily be employed for at least 30 hours per week on the first day of their apprenticeship and be paid at least a wage consistent with the law for both the time they are in work and in off-the-job learning. In exceptional circumstances, an apprentice may work fewer than 30 hours a week. In this case, the expected duration

of the apprenticeship will be extended to take this into account. This will also apply to any temporary period of part-time working.

- 3.2.5 All full-time apprentices (those that work 30 hours per week or more) must spend, as a minimum, 6 hours per week, over the planned duration of the practical period, on off-the-job training. This training is received during the individual's normal working hours, for the purpose of achieving the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the apprenticeship.
- 3.2.6 In all instances, the apprentice must be starting a new job role or in an existing job role, where they require significant new knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- 3.2.7 For full employment eligibility criteria please refer to the [ESFA Apprenticeship Funding Rules](#).

### **3.3 Prior qualifications**

- 3.3.1 An apprentice can undertake an apprenticeship at the same, or at a higher or lower level than a qualification they already hold, if the apprenticeship will allow the individual to acquire substantive new skills and the content of the training is materially different from any prior qualification or previous apprenticeship.
- 3.3.2 An assessment of the applicant's prior learning will be undertaken prior to commencement of the programme. Please refer to the UCQ Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy (AD-006) for further information: <https://ucq.ac.uk/policies/>
- 3.3.3 For full prior qualification eligibility criteria please refer to the [ESFA Apprenticeship Funding Rules](#) for the current academic year.

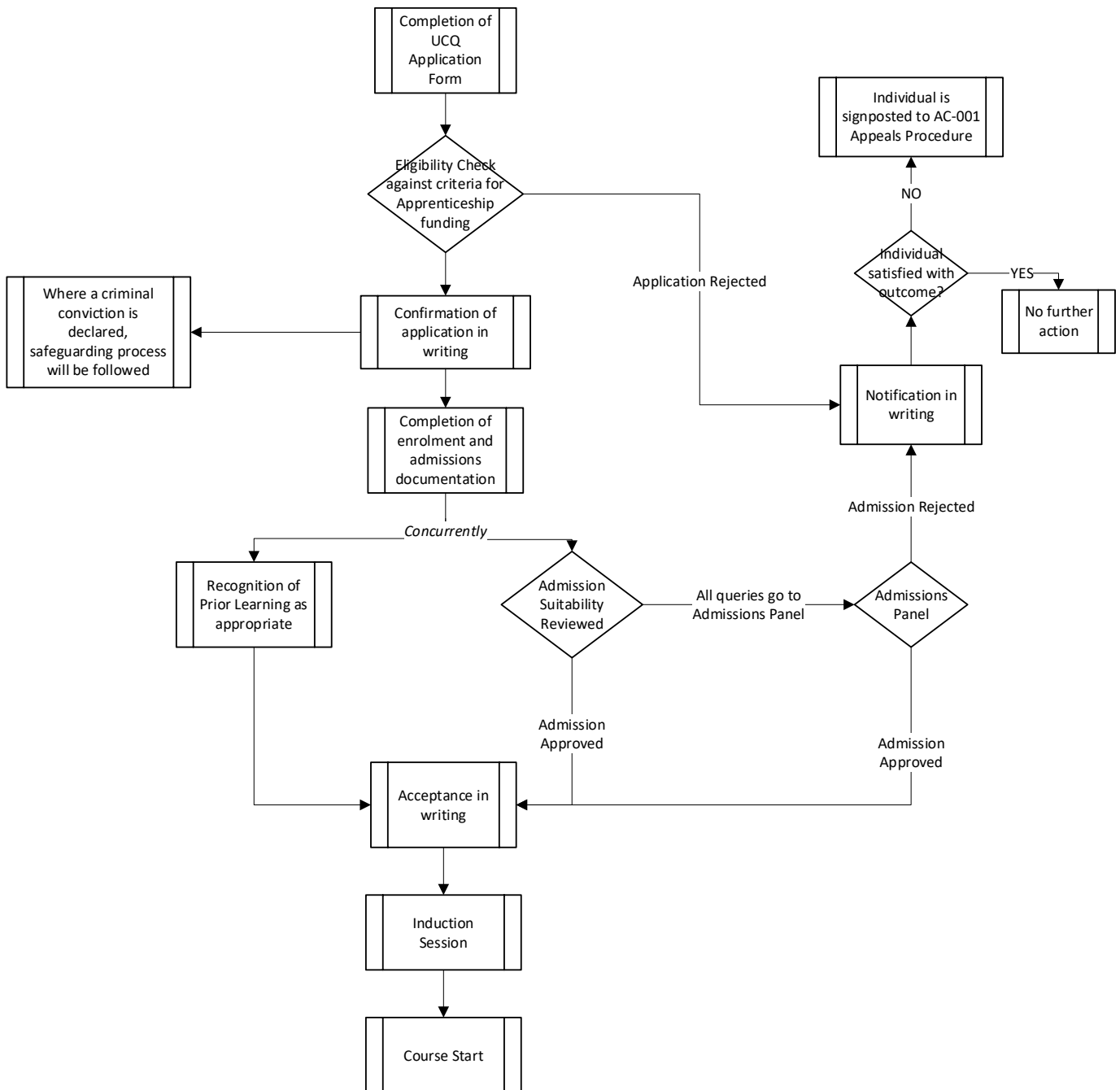
### **3.4 English and maths**

- 3.4.1 It is expected that students will have achieved a minimum level two qualification in English and maths prior to enrolment. In order to demonstrate this, applicants must provide a clear colour photocopy of their previously achieved functional skills qualification, or suitable proxy qualifications such as key skills or a GCSE certificate at grade C or above.
- 3.4.2 Where the student cannot provide evidence of this prior to enrolment, UCQ will support the student through a functional skills qualification in English and/or maths. In preparation for this qualification, students will undertake diagnostic assessments to determine the appropriate qualification level to start at. Students must be able to demonstrate a level two benchmark in English and maths in order to complete their apprenticeship.
- 3.4.3 Students undertaking English and maths functional skills during their programme will be given one year to achieve the qualification/s.

### 3.5 Further information

- 3.5.1 Eligibility for the apprenticeship programme is based upon the ESFA apprenticeship funding rules that are in force on the apprenticeship start date. The eligibility rules at the point of start will continue to be in effect for the duration of the apprenticeship even if the rules subsequently change.
- 3.5.2 For further information or clarity on the eligibility criteria for Apprenticeship Standards please refer to the suite of documents within the [ESFA Apprenticeship Funding Rules](#).

### 4. Admissions process



## 4.1 Application

- 4.1.1 There is no opening or closing dates for applications.
- 4.1.2 The applicant must complete an application form (available upon request from [admissions@ucq.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@ucq.ac.uk)). The applicant will also be required to complete BKSB numeracy and literacy initial assessments (<https://www.bksb.co.uk>). These initial assessments are separate to the English and maths components that form part of the apprenticeship Standard detailed in section 3.4.
- 4.1.3 To maintain UCQ's safeguarding arrangements, all applicants must declare on their application forms whether they have any unspent criminal convictions. If this is declared, the applicant will receive SA-004 Applicant Letter for Conviction Disclosure and QD OPS 005 Disclosure of Unspent Criminal Offences Form for completion. The completed form will be sent to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for review and subsequent action where required.
- 4.1.4 The completed and signed documentation must be returned to UCQ and confirmation of receipt will be provided within two working days. The HE Admissions Manager can be contacted on 0191 275 5015 or [admissions@ucq.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@ucq.ac.uk) for further questions regarding the application process. The application form and tests should be completed in full. If this is not the case these will be returned to the applicant for completion.
- 4.1.5 The HE Admissions Manager will assess the initial eligibility of the applicant against the ESFA apprenticeship funding rules for the relevant academic year.
- 4.1.6 NB: Applications cannot be processed unless an application form is completed in full.**

## 4.2 Suitability check

- 4.2.1 If all initial eligibility criteria has been met, the applicant will be asked to submit suitability information to support their application. The suitability check is designed to:
- Establish a sound understanding of the prior attainment, experience, and existing skills, knowledge and behaviours of the apprentice
  - Understand any difficulties or barriers that may challenge full engagement in learning and timely achievement of the target standard, so that relevant support plans can be put in place.
  - Establish whether the apprenticeship is an appropriate programme for the individual; and to ensure that the target programme will provide for the development of substantial skills, knowledge and behaviours (i.e. there will be 'distance travelled' in learning)
  - Inform the creation of the Individual Learning Plan which ensures that training already undertaken is not repeated
  - Inform any related fees for the programme
  - Inform the information, advice and guidance provided to individuals (and their employer) where it is found that the target apprenticeship is not appropriate for them.



4.2.2 The assessment may include a review of:

- Career aspirations and suitability
- Functional skills requirements
- Learning difficulties
- Potential barriers to learning
- Personal behaviours and effectiveness
- RPL
- Qualifications and achievements
- Job role, experience and contract
- Employer arrangements and support

### 4.3 Additional work

4.3.1 Where UCQ receives more eligible applications than places they are able to accommodate, all eligible applicants will be asked to carry out an additional piece of work such as a research activity. Prior to commencement of the research activity, the applicant will be provided clear marking criteria. All marking will be undertaken by a member of the Academic Programme Team.

### 4.4 Review and decisions

4.4.1 The Admissions Team will review the application in a way that is consistent with UCQ's [Equality and Diversity Policy](#) (GP-001). The application will also be reviewed against the [ESFA Apprenticeship Funding Rules](#). These strict eligibility criteria must be adhered to and UCQ will be unable to admit applicants that exceed their allocated offer numbers (where provided by the Employer).

### 4.5 Offers

4.5.1 All applicants shall be contacted by UCQ within 20 working days of their *finalised* application being received; this includes completed suitability checks and RPL documentation where applicable. If successful, a Letter of Acceptance will be sent to the applicant or provided in person by a UCQ representative.

4.5.2 All successful applicants will be required to attend a formal induction session prior to their official start date. A member of the Programme Team will be present at this session to provide all necessary information, advice and guidance (IAG).

### 4.6 Unsuccessful applications

4.6.1 Should an application be unsuccessful the applicant will be notified in writing explaining the outcome in general terms. If the applicant is not satisfied with this response they may appeal the decision through the Appeals Procedure (AC-001). This procedure is available from the UCQ website <https://ucq.ac.uk/policies/>

## 5. Questions and additional feedback

5.1 Further information about UCQ can be found at [www.ucq.ac.uk](http://www.ucq.ac.uk)



5.2 Additional questions or feedback can be emailed to [admissions@ucq.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@ucq.ac.uk)

## 6. Initial equalities impact assessment

<b>Department:</b> All	<b>Completed by:</b> Tara Henderson, Head of Policy & Governance	<b>Date of initial assessment:</b> 05/03/2021
<b>Area to be assessed:</b>	AD-001 Admissions Policy	
<b>Existing or new policy/procedure:</b>	Existing	
<b>What evidence has been used to inform the assessment and policy? (please list only)</b>		
<b>External guidance and requirements:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <a href="#">Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) apprenticeship rules of funding</a>.</li> <li>➤ Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Quality Code: <i>Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access</i></li> <li>➤ Equality Act 2010</li> <li>➤ Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR</li> </ul>		
<b>Internal guidance and requirements:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ UCQ Access and Participation Statement</li> <li>➤ Equality and Diversity Policy</li> <li>➤ Data and Privacy Policy</li> <li>➤ Safeguarding Policy</li> <li>➤ Initial Assessment for Apprenticeships Process</li> <li>➤ Consultation with Senior Leadership Team</li> </ul>		

<b>1. Describe the aims, objectives or purpose of the policy/procedure</b>	<p>This Policy sets out UCQ's apprenticeship admissions arrangements.</p> <p>UCQ aims to ensure equality of opportunity for applicants and for all students in teaching, learning and assessment. UCQ strives to create an environment whereby students are treated solely on the basis of their academic achievement, ability and potential, regardless of age, religion, ethnicity, gender, family or marital status, sexual orientation or disability. The initial eligibility benchmarks for Apprenticeship Standards is underpinned by the <a href="#">Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) apprenticeship rules of funding</a>. UCQ do not accept admission applications through UCAS.</p> <p>UCQ operates a procedure whereby a student can claim academic credit for relevant previous study or learning experiences, known as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). The RPL Policy (AD-006) can be found on the UCQ website at <a href="https://ucq.ac.uk/policies/">https://ucq.ac.uk/policies/</a></p>
<b>2. Which stakeholders/groups are intended to benefit from this policy/procedure?</b>	All HE apprenticeship applicants and their employers

<b>The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to have 'due regard' to the need to:-</b> (1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization (2) Advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and (3) Foster good relations between different groups		<b>3. Could the policy/procedure have a disproportionately adverse effect impact in terms of the aims set out in (1) to (3) of the Act on any of the protected characteristics?:-</b> <b>High</b> <b>Medium</b> <b>Low</b> <b>No adverse effect</b>	<b>4. Briefly explain how the policy/procedure furthers or prevents the aims set out in (1) to (3).</b>	<b>5. If there is a disproportionately adverse impact on any protected characteristics, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality or any other reason? If yes, please explain.</b>
<b>Protected characteristics</b>	<b>Age</b>	Low	Minimum age requirement imposed	Criteria imposed by ESFA for apprenticeships
	<b>Disability</b>	Low	Process must ensure the CMDA (Level 6) is at a suitable level for the applicant's learning needs	Criteria imposed by ESFA for apprenticeships
	<b>Gender</b>	No adverse effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	<b>Gender reassignment</b>	No adverse effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	No adverse effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	No adverse effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	<b>Race</b>	No adverse effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	<b>Religion or Belief</b>	No adverse effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	No adverse effect	Not applicable	Not applicable	

<b>6. Has there been any consultation/engagement with the appropriate protected characteristics?</b>	Yes. See full Equality Analysis for consultation details
<b>7. What action(s) will you take to reduce any disproportionately adverse impact, if any?</b>	None required
<b>8. Based on the information in sections 1 to 7, should this policy/procedure proceed to full Equality Analysis? (recommended if one or more 'High' under section 2)</b>	Yes due to socio-economic impact of policy
<b>Assessor signature:</b> 	<b>Approved by:</b> <b>Michelle Elliott</b> 
	<b>Date approved:</b> 05/03/2021