



## **Higher Education Services Admissions Policy**

**July 2025**

## DOCUMENT INFORMATION AND VERSION CONTROL

<b>Name of policy/procedure:</b>	Higher Education Services Admissions Policy
<b>Document owner:</b>	Academic Registrar
<b>Date of creation:</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> July 2025
<b>Equality Impact Assessment date and reference:</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> July 2025
<b>Date of last review:</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> July 2025
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	Prof. Dr Alison Watson
<b>Date of next review:</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> July 2028
<b>Related documents:</b>	Brunel University, <a href="#">Admissions policy   Brunel University of London</a> Roehampton University, <a href="#">Admissions Policy for Taught Degree Programmes</a>

<b>Version</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Brief summary of changes</b>
1	A. Watson	29/07/25	Original version

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# Higher Education Services Admissions Policy

## 1.0 Introduction

**1.1** The FutureLearn Admissions Policy sets out the principles and processes which govern the admission of students onto a FutureLearn higher education programme. The policy covers all taught programmes delivered through full time or part time online learning. This policy does not include those students who are under an OPM sub-contractual arrangement, for example, Brunel University and Roehampton University.

**1.2** FutureLearn is committed to recruiting, selecting, and admitting students in line with its legal and regulatory responsibilities, including those relating to:

- Equality, fairness as defined by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), [UK Quality Code for Higher Education 2024](#).
- Consumer protection, [Consumer protection for students - Office for Students](#).
- Office for Students (OfS) Conditions of Registration, [Conditions of registration - Office for Students](#).

**1.3** FutureLearn admissions processes are transparent, accessible, inclusive, and applied consistently. Recognising the diverse backgrounds of its applicants, FutureLearn is committed to actively encouraging applications from all individuals who meet the required qualifications and demonstrate the potential to thrive in their chosen programmes.

**1.4** This policy is to be read alongside the policy regulations for admissions at Brunel University (BU), and the Roehampton University (RU), (where appropriate).

- [Admissions Policy and Procedure - October 2024](#)
- [Admissions Policy for Taught Degree Programmes](#)

## 2.0 Purpose and Scope

**2.1** FutureLearn drives impact by transforming careers with accessible, lifelong learning. It does this by shaping the future of education, addressing key skills gaps and providing a flexible approach to learning and personalisation and partnering with reputable leaders in education so it supports its learners. The admissions process contributes to this purpose by selecting and guiding applicants to the most suitable programme for them. FutureLearn aims to:

- Assess applicants fairly based upon qualification, potential and motivation.
- Recruit students within the parameters of the validated programme entry requirements.
- Promote equality of opportunity, diversity and improve the opportunity of underrepresented groups in higher education.
- Making the admissions process accessible to all, making reasonable adjustments to the process in compliance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Providing accurate information to applicants on the programme content and delivery in the form of programme specifications, student handbooks, fees, and other costs.

## 3.0 Discontinued Courses

**3.1** FutureLearn collaborates closely with partner universities to deliver the programmes and courses as described. However, there are some circumstances where programme and course information may differ. Both FutureLearn and its university partner can:

- Make reasonable amendments to the content and syllabus of the programme being applied to.
- Alter the programme delivery, type, and timings of assessments.
- Make reasonable updates to policies, regulations, and processes around the programme of study.
- Suspend, discontinue, or not provide the programme of study.

**3.2** For further details of the circumstances in which FutureLearn Limited may make changes to its programmes, qualifications to be awarded, modes of study, and teaching location and facilities including how FutureLearn would manage each situation fairly to students – please refer to the [Changes Policy](#).

## 4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

**4.1** The admissions department is overseen by the Academic Registrar to ensure compliance and maintenance of operational standards.

**4.2** Academic teams are assigned responsibilities at a programme level to support fair and transparent non-standard application decisions, provide consistent, accessible advice on entry requirements and to maintain the accuracy of information provided to the admissions department. For BU and RU non-standard entry is referred to the relevant institution for assessment. For validated partners non-standard applications will be reviewed by a FutureLearn admissions tutor.

**4.3** Education Advisors are fully trained on the admissions policy and process and assess applications based on an applicants' qualifications, and English language level, (and in some cases work experience). An applicant will either receive an unconditional offer, a conditional offer or a decision not to admit. Education Advisors will refer non-standard applications to the appropriate admissions tutor for assessment, either through the partner institution for BU and RU, or to a FutureLearn admissions tutor for validated partnership.

## 5.0 Applicants with Disabilities

**5.1** FutureLearn encourages applicants with a disability to declare it upon application either verbally or via email. Applicants can also declare this on their application form. Whilst the same application criteria applies to all applicants, by being aware of a disability FutureLearn can take any necessary steps to make reasonable adjustments to the process. Failure to disclose a disability may lead to reasonable adjustments not being provided, due to lack of knowledge of the applicant's needs, and this may impact the admissions process and outcome for the applicant.

## 6.0 Applications with Criminal Convictions

**6.1** A criminal conviction does not necessarily exclude an applicant from studying with FutureLearn or its partners. Providing information concerning criminal convictions is a necessary part of the process. Applicants must declare any **unspent convictions only** and the circumstances surrounding the conviction so that the admissions advisor can assess this along with the Academic Registrar and Director of Academic Affairs, and any risks, including harm to others or failure to complete elements of the programme due to the conviction can be considered. Named referees may be contacted as part of the assessment. The list below outlines relevant criminal convictions that will be assessed, as defined in the [Rehabilitation of Offenders Act](#).

- Any kind of violence including (but not limited to) threatening behaviour, offences concerning the intention to harm, or offences which resulted in actual bodily harm.
- Offences listed in the Sex Offences Act 2003
- The unlawful supply of controlled drugs or substances, where the conviction concerns commercial drug dealing or trafficking.

- Offences involving firearms.
- Offences involving arson.
- Offences listed in the Terrorism Act 2006.

**6.2** Outcomes of the assessment where it is found that the entry requirements have been met include, although are not limited to:

- To offer the place without conditions.
- To offer the place subject to specific conditions.
- To request further information to contribute to the risk assessment.
- Reject the application.

**6.3** Any serving prisoner should forward their application via the prison authority, and they will advise on the suitability of the applicant in addition to the standard risk assessment in place at FutureLearn.

## 7.0 Applicants Under the Age of 18

**7.1** Any applicant under the age of 18 is treated fairly and within the parameters of the [Safeguarding Policy](#) at FutureLearn.

## 8.0 Entry Requirements

**8.1** Entry requirements are published on FutureLearn’s website, along with the requirements for supplementary supporting information such as the personal statement and/or references.

**8.2** In addition, FutureLearn provides relevant supporting information to interested applicants including the programme specification, programme components, learning outcomes and methods of assessment.

**8.3** FutureLearn considers non-standard applications. This is based usually on minimum formal education, minimum working years’ experience, and additional documents they need to present such as reference letters, a detailed personal statement or CV. Requirements for non-standard applications are made clear to applicants by the programme information and/or education advisors.

## 9.0 Application

**9.1** Applicants apply through the [FutureLearn website](#) and should provide all required information accurately and fully. Admissions decisions are made in good faith and on the basis that the application is a true reflection of the applicant, and no false statements have been made or significant information omitted.

**9.2** Applicants with any outstanding debts with the partner university can apply for a programme but will not be enrolled onto a new programme until the debt has been paid in full.

**9.3** As part of the application process any applicant seeking credit transfer or Recognition of Prior Learning are assessed as part of the regulations of the partner university. Evidence of the credits and prior learning achievement are expected to be included as part of the supporting evidence of the application.

**9.4** Any readmitting applicants who have left the programme previously through voluntary or compulsory withdrawal are assessed as per the criteria of the programme and regulations of the partner university. FutureLearn reserves the right to assess the previous academic record as part of the application process.

**9.5** Any deferred applications that have met the entry criteria may hold their offer for a period of time as set out by the partner university.

**9.6** FutureLearn checks qualifications, personal statements, and references. Any fraud, plagiarism or omissions may lead to the application being rejected.

**9.7** The applicant is assessed on the capability to pay the programme fees. The fees are communicated to the applicant via FutureLearn's website and/or admissions advisors.

**9.8** All applicant's data is processed in accordance with FutureLearn and the partner universities data protection policies.

- [Data protection policy - FutureLearn](#)

## **10.0 Decisions**

**10.1** Where a standard application has been submitted and the entry criteria has been met an unconditional offer is issued by the admissions advisor.

**10.2** Where largely the entry criteria have been met but with some omissions then a conditional offer could be made on the agreement that the information is submitted prior to commencing with the programme.

**10.3** Where the application is non-standard this is reviewed by an admissions tutor first and then one of the above options is applied.

**10.4** If the entry criteria and non-standard entry is not met then the applicant is likely to be denied access to the programme or/and provided with an alternative programme of study.

**10.5** Once an offer has been made applicants receive information about payment of fees at enrolment, and UK learners are given a link to the SLC website page.

**10.6** Applicants have up to the commencement of their programme to accept an offer made to them by FutureLearn or can they terminate the relationship and reject the offer.

## **11.0 Appeals and Complaints**

**11.1** Applicants can appeal an admissions decision under certain circumstances usually when there has been a procedural irregularity, new information is available to support the application, extenuating circumstances or when it is believed that the process has not been conducted fairly. This does not automatically assume an offer will be provided based on the appeal. The appeal can be made to the Head of Admissions.

**11.2** If an applicant is unhappy with the service received from FutureLearn then they can submit a complaint to the Head of Admissions.

**11.3** There is no discrimination or prejudice against any person making an appeal or complaint.

## **12.0 Monitoring of the Policy**

**12.1** Monitoring is the responsibility of the Academic Partnerships and Admissions Committee and forms a quarterly and annual review process.

- A quarterly audit of standard offers is sent to the Programme Leaders to assess their accuracy and compliance with the validated programmes. This is reported to the Academic Partnerships and Admissions Committee at the end available date.
- An annual report of Admissions is submitted to the Academic Partnerships and Admissions Committee by the Academic Registrar.