

Admissions Policy

(Last reviewed November 2025)

The Mission of Arts University Bournemouth is to be the leading professional Arts University dedicated to turning creativity to careers. Arts University Bournemouth aims to create a student body that is balanced and diverse in terms of cultural background and experience and recruit students who have the ability to successfully complete their chosen course.

Arts University Bournemouth will achieve these aims through:

- Encouraging applications from all those with the motivation and academic ability to thrive at the University, whatever their background
- Assessing each application in a holistic way
- Offering places to applicants who have the potential to successfully complete their course
- Transparency in the admissions process.

This policy complies with current legislation affecting the admission of students and is in line with best practice in the area of admissions; specifically the [Quality Assurance Agency \(QAA\) UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access](#). This policy applies to admission to all of the University's courses with the exception of courses advertised through AUB Online (<https://online.aub.ac.uk/>).

The Arts University Bournemouth is committed to the provision of a working and learning environment founded on dignity, respect and equity where unfair discrimination of any kind is treated with the utmost seriousness. It has developed and implemented an EDI Action Plan to guide its work in this area. All the University's policies and practices are designed to meet the principles of dignity, respect and fairness, and take account of the commitments set out in the EDI Action Plan. This policy has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment to ensure consideration with regard to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

1 Admissions Principles

- 1.1 The University aims to recruit students from a wide range of backgrounds and who are able to demonstrate the potential and motivation to succeed on one of our courses.
- 1.2 The University assesses applications in a holistic way using the entirety of the application to determine the suitability of an applicant to their chosen course of study. Each application will be considered on its own merit and will be assessed against the stated entry requirements of the course.
- 1.3 The University is committed to providing a fair admissions service for all applicants, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
- 1.4 The University is committed to the principle of transparency and providing information in a format that is consistent across all of its channels.
- 1.5 The University aims to conduct itself in a courteous, respectful, professional and timely manner in all matters relating to admissions.

2 Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1 The Admissions Manager owns this policy. Any changes to this policy, or the stated entry criteria are approved by Academic Board.
- 2.2 The Admissions team are responsible for ensuring that associated procedures are carried out in line with this Policy.
- 2.3 The Admissions Manager is responsible for ensuring that the Admissions team receive the appropriate and necessary training to be able to successfully discharge their duties in a fair and consistent way, in line with the strategic aims and objectives of the University.
- 2.4 The University's published course pages and other materials (such as the prospectus) that include details about entry requirements are maintained by the Admissions and Marketing teams.
- 2.5 This policy will be reviewed yearly by the Admissions Manager and where necessary, more frequently following significant changes affecting admissions in Higher Education in the national and/or international landscape.

3 Qualifications for entry

- 3.1 The University welcomes applications from appropriately qualified students, accepting a wide range of qualifications, including (but not limited to): Foundation courses, International Baccalaureate, BTEC National Diploma, A levels, Advanced Diploma, Access to HE courses, T-levels, undergraduate degrees and postgraduate degrees.
- 3.2 International qualifications will be considered and evaluated by referring to independently published guides recognised within the United Kingdom higher education sector such as UKENIC and UCAS.
- 3.3 Recognition of prior learning (RPL), including work experience and training can be used in further and higher education for the purpose of entry onto a course. Recognition of prior experiential learning (RPEL) is an extension of RPL and includes assessed learning gained from work experience. More information about this can be found in our RPL policy.
- 3.4 Mature students that do not meet the minimum academic requirements as published for entry, but who have significant, extensive and relevant work experience, may be offered a place of study on their chosen course at the discretion of the relevant member of academic staff.

4 Processing Applications

- 4.1 All applications are considered on an equitable basis, against published entry criteria and are assessed in a holistic way. Each application will be assessed on an individual basis and a range of criteria from the application will be taken into account to identify the applicant's ability to meet the demands of the course. This includes:
 - Past academic performance
 - School / college / employer reference
 - Predicted qualifications/ grades
 - Portfolio
 - Commitment, motivation and potential, normally evidence through a personal statement or covering letter
 - Relevant experience
 - Any extenuating circumstances
- 4.2 Applications for undergraduate courses are required to be submitted through UCAS. Applications for FE or postgraduate courses, including research degrees, are made using direct applications which can be accessed through the University website (www.aub.ac.uk).
- 4.3 There are occasions where the applications do not contain sufficient information to enable an accurate assessment of fee status to be made. In such cases, we may request applicants to undertake a Fee Assessment task to determine the correct fee status for each applicant in line with the regulations and guidance provided by the UK Government. More information

can be found on the [UK Council for International Student Affairs \(UKCISA\) website](#). This judgement about the fee status of an applicant is made irrespective of any applications made in previous years.

- 4.4 Allowances shall be made for any candidate with verified exceptional circumstances or who has faced difficult challenges in a positive way, where these are made known to the University (e.g. illness, death of a parent, disrupted education, or refugee status). The University may decide to offer a place to a candidate whose academic performance appears to have been adversely affected by such circumstances and who might otherwise have been expected to do better.
- 4.5 Applicants must be a minimum age of 16 or above to be considered for any of the University's courses of study. Applicants who would not be 16 or older at the time of the start of the course would not be considered further for a place on their chosen course of study.
- 4.6 Applicants who are under 18 at the time of the start of their course will be required to provide consent from a parent/guardian before enrolling onto their chosen course of study. These documents will be provided alongside any offer made. Further information about the University's approach to students who are under 18 can be found in the [AUB Under 18 Policy Statement](#).

5 Offers

- 5.1 The levels of conditional offers made will be in line with published entry requirements and will not vary substantially from these.
- 5.2 An offer for a place of study will be communicated to applicants by email. This email states the conditions of offer, course, start and end date. A copy of the terms of offer is sent electronically via the AUB Applicant Portal. Offers made to applicants will be the same as our minimum stated academic entry criteria, regardless of the predicted grades an applicant presents.
- 5.3 When making offers of study to applicants, the University utilises a contextual offers scheme and more information about this can be found on our website and in section 6 of this policy.
- 5.4 Where an applicant has applied through UCAS the University will communicate our decision through the official channels of UCAS. Where an applicant has applied directly to the University, a formal decision will be made and communicated directly to the applicant by the Admissions team.
- 5.5 In some instances, where a candidate has applied for one course and is not successful, an alternative course may be offered. An offer, whether conditional or unconditional, will be made in good faith, taking into account information as supplied by the applicant and/or referee at the time of the application.
- 5.6 AUB reserves the right to make unconditional offers to applicants where the quality of the application is exceptional, but where the applicant has not yet demonstrated that they meet the published minimum academic entry requirements of the course, at the discretion of the relevant member of academic staff.

6 Contextual Admissions

- 6.1 Applications received through UCAS to the University's undergraduate courses include contextual information about an applicant. These factors will be considered in the assessment of an application.
- 6.2 The University uses the following contextual data indicators to establish eligibility criteria for the use of contextual admissions:
 - Geographic Areas of Low Participation in Higher Education
 - Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD1) Quintiles 1 & 2
 - Care Leavers
 - Carers
 - Estranged
 - Parents in the Armed Forces
 - Applicants in receipt of Free School Meals

- Participation in eligible Access and Participation activities at the University
- 6.3 Applicants who meet the eligibility criteria in 6.2, and our academic entry requirements as listed above, will be guaranteed an interview or portfolio review for the course that they have applied for.
- 6.4 In recognition of significant educational barriers faced by eligible applicants, but whom demonstrate the potential to meet our academic requirements, the University utilises contextual offer-making in the form of a grade-reduction of up to two grades below the stated minimum entry criteria in their offers. This means that where a course requires 120 UCAS points for entry, a contextual offer will be made at 104 UCAS points (equivalent to 2 A-level grades less).
- 6.5 Applicants who meet the eligibility criteria and apply for one of the University's undergraduate courses, and who are unsuccessful, will be offered a place on the Foundation Course if they meet the entry requirements for it; including in GCSE English and Mathematics.
- 6.6 The University's Access & Participation team are able to offer support to applicants who meet the eligibility criteria, and a designated contact to offer advice and support during the application process. This may include, but is not limited to: support at Offer Holder Days, Auditions, and interviews.
- 6.7 Support is available to applicants who meet the eligibility criteria through funding for travel to events including: Offer-Holder Days, Interviews and Auditions. Requests for this support by applicants who are eligible for a contextual offer should be made to wp@aub.ac.uk.
- 6.8 The way in which the University undertakes contextual admissions is reviewed on a yearly basis to ensure that it is able to achieve the stated aims of the Access and Participation plan of encouraging a more diverse cohort of students from a wider range of backgrounds.

7 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

- 7.1 Applications from students who have non-standard qualifications or who wish work or life experience to be taken into account as part of their application will be considered on an individual basis.
- 7.2 Applicants who wish to formally apply for RPL should refer to the University's RPL Policy (insert link). Admission to a course or exemption from units on the basis of credit transfer will always be on the basis of prior certificated learning that has taken place at another recognised higher education institution. Applicants can also find information about Credit and Time Limits on RPL in the RPL Policy.

8 Fraudulent applications

- 8.1 The discovery that any information disclosed on an application or enrolment form is fraudulent, or the omission of relevant information, will result in the offer of a place being withdrawn. If this discovery is made before a decision has been made about an application, the application will be withdrawn and noted as fraudulent.
- 8.2 Where the University is not satisfied with the accuracy or integrity of the information that has been provided, it reserves the right to ask an applicant, their referee or their employer to provide more information or submission of further documents (for example, proof of identity, evidence to assess fee status, copies of qualifications, English language test or employment history). In the most serious cases, the University reserves the right to reject or withdraw an application if it is not satisfied that the information or documentation provided is authentic.
- 8.3 All personal statements supporting applications to higher education processed through UCAS are checked with a specially developed version of the similarity detection system. Institutions are notified of any cases where there are reasonable grounds to suspect collusion and applicants are also notified that the UCAS Similarity Detection Service has identified their personal statement as potentially plagiarised. Any attempt by applicants to provide false,

misleading information could lead to their application being cancelled.

The University recognises that there is a range of software that applicants may use to assist them in completing their personal statement or covering letter. Where we have suspicions that the personal statement is not authentic and has been composed using such software (eg. artificial intelligence), we reserve the right to request a new personal statement within defined parameters and timescales that will be made clear to applicants at the time of writing. The University reserves the right to withdraw an application that it suspects is not genuine.

- 8.4 If, after enrolling onto a course of study it is discovered that a student had deliberately omitted, or supplied false information during the admissions process the University reserves the right to enact disciplinary procedures as set out in the [Student Disciplinary Policy](#). These may lead to the student being withdrawn from their course of study.
- 8.5 Applicants whom have previously been students on a course of study at the University and who were withdrawn from this course of study due to disciplinary or non-engagement issues would not normally be considered for a new course of study unless the applicant is able to satisfactorily demonstrate behavioural change since the time that they were a student at the University. Procedure?

9 Unsuccessful applications

- 9.1 Where the University is not able to offer a place of study to an applicant for the course that they have applied for, a brief reason for the unsuccessful outcome will be relayed to the applicant.
- 9.2 Any request for any further feedback must be requested in writing. Applicants should contact admissions@aub.ac.uk by email. Applicants should note that the provision of further feedback does not constitute a reconsideration of an application.
- 9.3 Applicants who receive an unsuccessful decision based upon a review of a portfolio or performance at audition or interview will not normally be considered again for a place of study within the same application cycle.

10 Requests for deferral or withdrawal

- 10.1 The University is happy to consider requests for deferred entry. Applicants may defer their entry onto a course by indicating a later start year on their application, or by submitting a request after an application has been submitted.
- 10.2 Deferral of a place of study will normally be for a maximum of 1 year. Applicants who wish to start on a later year of entry would be required to submit a new application.
- 10.3 If an applicant wishes to request a deferral of entry to the following year, or withdraw their application, they should email admissions@aub.ac.uk stating their AUB ID number.

11 Changes to Courses

- 11.1 Occasionally it may be necessary to make changes to a course between the time of an offer of a place is made and the enrolment of students onto that course. If this occurs, the University will ensure that prospective students are informed at the earliest opportunity of any significant changes to a course and will be advised of all options open to them. Applicants will be contacted as soon as possible, and where possible, an alternate course will be offered.

12 International Students

- 12.1 The University is listed on the [Register of Student Sponsors](#) which allows it to sponsor international students who require a student visa to study in the UK.
- 12.2 Where an applicant who requires sponsorship from AUB to undertake their course of study is not able to demonstrate that they meet the requirements of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) for a

successful visa application, the University reserves the right to withdraw any offers made and will not produce a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS).

- 12.3 In line with its sponsor duties, the University is required to view and maintain a copy of each international student's current passport and visa (valid for study at Arts University Bournemouth), along with original qualification documents on the basis of which admission was granted to the University. The University undertakes these checks as part of the registration process upon arrival. We cannot permit an international student to enrol/register at the University without undertaking this process.
- 12.4 To ensure compliance with its sponsor duties the University will report any late arrivals/non enrollers to the UKVI. Students who start their course remotely and transition to campus based learning in the UK may be granted approval for a late arrival at the discretion of the course leader and immigration team. Any changes in a student's enrolment status will also be reported to the UKVI as soon as it is known.
- 12.5 The University will normally only consider international applicants who have completed their academic study at an institution that is recognised by UKENIC (www.enic.org.uk).

13 English Language Proficiency

- 13.1 Applicants must demonstrate that they meet the minimum expected standards of English language levels to be able to successfully undertake one of the University's courses; all of which are taught in English. This can be done through meeting the stated minimum requirements as set out on our website through an appropriate qualification/test that demonstrates proficiency in the following components: Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking.
- 13.2 Applicants who do not meet the stated minimum expected standards of English proficiency, but who are within one grade of these requirements, will be offered the chance to undertake a pre-sessional programme to meet the stated minimum expected standards of English proficiency.
- 13.3 International applicants who require a student visa may have to take an English language test approved by the UKVI, such as IELTS. More information about the minimum standards of expected English language accepted for our courses can be found [here](#).

14 Access Agreement

- 14.1 The University has an Access Agreement that is approved by the Office for Students and is applicable to UK applicants wishing to study one of our undergraduate courses.
- 14.2 The University has devised a range of support mechanisms to encourage applications from, and subsequent retention of, students from under-represented groups.
- 14.3 The University's Access Agreement as approved by the Office for Students includes information on bursaries and other financial support for students. The full scope of this support can be seen on our [Widening Access to AUB page](#).

15 Financial support

- 15.1 The University offers a range of additional financial support for students who may face additional barriers when accessing our courses. This includes grants and bursaries for individuals experiencing financial hardship, alongside dedicated funds for students who may have experience of being in care or who are estranged from their immediate family.
- 15.2 Scholarships and Bursaries, including progression discounts are advertised on our [Fees and Financial Support](#) page.

16 Applicants with Disabilities and Additional Learning Needs

- 16.1 The University welcomes applicants with disabilities and additional learning needs and encourages applicants to declare these when applying for one of our courses of study so that where possible, the correct provisions can be put in place for that applicant if they eventually

enrol onto a course of study.

16.2 Declarations and information provided about disabilities and additional learning needs are not considered when an application is assessed for academic suitability for the chosen course of study.

17 Training

17.1 All student admissions are coordinated by a centralised admissions team to ensure fairness and consistency. All staff working within the Admissions team and those that engage with admissions processes are appropriately trained and resourced to be able to accurately and effectively carry out their duties in line with the Admissions Policy.

17.2 Staff working in the Admissions team receive training in a range of areas including (but not limited to): Fair Admissions, Equality and Diversity, Unconscious Bias and Fees assessments. Training resources are sourced from multiple areas and include [Supporting Professionalism in Admissions \(SPA\) guidance](#) on best practice in the area of admissions.

18 Applicants with Criminal Convictions

18.1 The University has a duty of care to its community of students, staff and visitors to ensure that it continues to be a safe place to study, work and visit at all times. As such we reserve the right to refuse admission onto a course of study if there is a significant risk of danger to our community.

18.2 The University does not ask applicants for details of any spent or unspent criminal convictions as part of the admissions process.

18.3 If an applicant applies for AUB accommodation, they will be asked to declare any spent/unspent criminal convictions. The University reserves the right to refuse the provision of halls accommodation to applicants who, following a risk assessment, it is deemed would pose a risk to other members of the community living in AUB accommodation.

19 Data Protection

19.1 In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 the University must protect the information disclosed on any aspect of an application. In line with this legislation, we are unable to discuss any aspect of an application with a third party unless we receive confirmation from the applicant in writing stating UCAS number or student number, course applied for, date of birth, details of the person(s) the applicant wishes to allow this privilege and a satisfactory reason why this is required. This does not mean that we will refuse to accept information from a third party with reference to an application but we will not disclose information without the permission of the applicant concerned.

19.2 The University may use anonymised data that is collected as part of the application process for statutory reporting and statistical requirements.

19.3 The University works with external partners for some of our courses, including the sharing of applicant data for applications to these courses. The nature of this relationship and data sharing agreements will be made clear to applicants on the University website and those of our partners. Additionally this will be referred to in application acknowledgement and offer emails.

20 Complaints

20.1 The University aims to ensure a good and efficient applicant experience for every applicant to its courses of study. However, if an applicant feels they have received an unsatisfactory experience, they may wish to consider making a formal complaint.

Complaints must be made in writing, by email or by letter to:

Admissions - Arts University Bournemouth, Wallisdown, Poole BH12 5HH
Telephone: 01202 363384 or email admissions@aub.ac.uk

20.2 Formal written complaints will be referred in the first instance to the Admissions Team management and acknowledged within seven working days of receipt. All written complaints will receive a written reply, normally by email, within 20 days, or notification of reason for any delay.

This written reply will inform the applicant whether or not a complaint has been upheld and the reasoning behind the outcome. If a complaint cannot be resolved by Admissions, it will be referred to the Vice-Chancellor's Executive.