

Admissions Procedure for Assessing Unspent Criminal Convictions

The University is an institution with a concentration of young and potentially vulnerable people. Many such people live in accommodation provided for student use by the University. The University in considering whether to admit a student wishes to ensure that an applicant would not constitute an unreasonable risk to its members or property. Consequently it considers declarations of criminal convictions made in accordance with UCAS procedures and also asks other applicants to make similar declarations. The University will not unreasonably deny access to the University to any applicant on the basis of criminal record.

The following procedure exists in order that applications from individuals declaring a criminal conviction which is deemed unspent under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act are appropriately assessed on their suitability for a place at the University. This procedural note is intended to guide Schools as to the process that will be followed and to their part in that process. Separate information is provided by the Admissions Office to applicants who need to be assessed.

Seeking a declaration through the Application form

1. All categories of student applicant are required to make a relevant declaration, and accordingly application forms for all levels of study in all Schools should include three statements/notes as follows,
 - a) a statement to enable the applicant to declare a conviction

“The University requires you to state whether or not you have a criminal conviction. Please tick either the Yes or No box. If you tick Yes you may be required to provide details of any convictions”.
 - b) a statement to the effect

“I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, the information given in this form is correct and complete”.
 - c) a note indicating that

“Failure to disclose a criminal conviction on each application to the University may affect either acceptance on to a course or continuation of studies on it”.

Schools should note that declarations concerning unspent criminal convictions are required for all programmes except those involving study at UEA for less than 10 weeks duration full or part time.

Programmes with special requirements

2. The University has particular programmes of study where the criminal conviction of an applicant requires an assessment to be made by the University as to professional suitability in accordance with procedures determined by statutory regulation or the requirements of a professional body. Entrants to the following programmes at UEA, because of the nature of the programme, are subject to special consideration in relation to criminal convictions and

procedures exist in the Schools of Study concerned for obtaining and considering disclosures:

School	Course	Note
EDU	PGCE, PG Dip Counselling	1
OPT	BSc Occupational Therapy	1
OPT	BSc Physiotherapy	1
NAM	All pre registration courses	1
SWK	MA/DipSW	
CCE	Certificate in Counselling Young People	
MED	ClinPsyD	1
	MB/BS	1

(Note 1: Declarations concerning entry to these qualifications are exempt from restrictions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act)

The assessment will be conducted by the School concerned and in accordance with the relevant required procedures. Where the School proposes to admit an applicant it shall first consult with the Assistant Registrar (Admissions) to ensure that consideration of the applicant has not been less stringent than that which would have applied to any other student considered by the following general University procedure.

General procedure for assessing declared criminal convictions

3. Where an applicant has declared a criminal conviction, the School Admissions Officer/Exchange Officer concerned will first decide whether the applicant is suitable on academic grounds. This may involve inviting the applicant for interview.
4. Where the School does not wish to make an offer to the applicant on academic grounds, the School shall write to the applicant in the usual way to notify him/her of the decision to reject. For applicants rejected on academic grounds this is the end of the procedure (although, like all rejected applicants they have access to the Admissions Complaints Procedure if they wish to raise a complaint).
5. Where the School does wish to make an offer on academic grounds they shall refer the application to the Admissions Office in the Registry for the next stage of consideration. The School should not take any further action concerning the applicant until advised by the Admissions Office.
6. The Admissions Office shall write to the applicant and request documentation regarding the offence. In the case of UK students this would be details of offence, sentence passed and date and any probation details. This information should be sought by the applicant from the Probation Service or other appropriate authority.

7. Equivalent documentation may not be available to EU and International applicants. The Admissions Office will ask these applicants to make a formal statement which should be verified by an appropriate referee (eg applicant's lawyer).
8. Applicants will be required to produce documentation concerning their conviction within a specified period. Failure on the part of an applicant to provide the documentation within the specified period will result in rejection of his/her application. The Admissions Office will advise the School concerned to issue a rejection decision to the applicant.
9. When the Admissions Office receives the required documentation from an applicant as requested, an assessment of the applicant's non-academic suitability for a place of study shall be made by a panel consisting of the Academic Registrar and the Dean of Students supported by the Assistant Registrar (Admissions) based on the paperwork available. The decision as to whether or not to admit the applicant will take into account,
 - whether the criminal conviction has any bearing on the applicants suitability to become a member of the student body (eg violent or sexual crimes, drug dealing)
 - the length of time since the offence(s) were committed
 - whether the applicant has re-offended, and if so whether there is a pattern to the offences
 - whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the time of the offencesand the panel will give particular consideration to whether the applicant, if admitted, would be likely
 - to endanger staff or students of the University or those with whom the University interacts
 - to be a threat to University property
 - unlawfully to disrupt the work of the University
 - to bring the University into disrepute
10. If it is decided that the applicant is acceptable for entry to UEA, the School of Study shall be informed of the decision, together with any conditions of entry, by the Assistant Registrar (Admissions). The School shall then use a standard letter to accompany their offer.
11. If it is decided that the applicant is not acceptable for entry to UEA, the School of Study shall be informed of the decision by the Assistant Registrar (Admissions). The Assistant Registrar (Admissions) will directly inform the applicant and outline details of the appeal process. Rejected applicants will be sent details of the appeal procedure (see below) if requested within 10 working days of notification of the original decision.

Appeal Process

12. An applicant may appeal against a decision on one or more of the grounds of procedural irregularity, prejudice or bias, or extenuating circumstances. The Registrar and Secretary shall consider any appeal, and his or her decision shall be final. The Assistant Registrar (Admissions) shall inform the applicant of the outcome of the appeal, and notify the School of Study, the Dean of Students and the Academic Registrar.