

Fair Access Admissions Policy (2019/2020)

<p>Purpose:</p>	<p>The aim of this document is to provide clear and transparent summary of the University's processes and procedures for ensuring that Scottish undergraduates from diverse backgrounds have fair access through our admissions procedures to the opportunities offered by an education at Heriot-Watt. This policy is aligned to our Widening Access Strategy 2019-2025 which outlines our vision as the following:</p> <p><i>We have a proven track record as being an educationally and socially-inclusive University. We will continue to reach out, support and reward talented individuals across society.</i></p> <p>We recognise that not everyone has an equal opportunity to demonstrate their full academic potential from their school or college qualifications alone. For this reason, we aim to identify Scottish applicants who could benefit from additional consideration in the admissions process. This process is called the Fair Access Admissions Policy, and it enables us to consider an applicant's achievements in context.</p> <p>Appendix 1a outlines categories which would enable a student to be considered under Access Thresholds.</p> <p>Appendix 1b outlines categories which would enable a student to be considered under Contextual Admissions.</p>
<p>Scope & Definitions:</p>	<p>Scope This policy applies to all Scottish undergraduate applicants to Heriot-Watt University.</p> <p>Fair Access Admissions The process whereby we recognise that not every student has an equal opportunity to demonstrate their academic potential because of their circumstances and/or background.</p> <p>Access Threshold The University sets Access Thresholds in terms of entrance qualifications (see Appendix 2) and guarantees to make an offer to any prospective student who meets the criteria of at least one of the categories described in Appendix 1a.</p> <p>Contextual Admissions The University uses the categories described in Appendix 1b to identify those applicants who could benefit from additional consideration during the admissions process. In particular, applicants who satisfy the criteria for at least one of the categories listed in Appendix 1b may be given a more flexible offer from the University. For a Higher/Advanced Higher student this may take the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Making an offer to an applicant with up to two grades lower than the standard requirement i.e. AABB would be BBBB, AACC or ABBC. ○ Making an offer to an applicant with one less Higher than the standard entry requirements i.e. AABB would be AAB or ABB, BBBBC would be BBBB or BBBC

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Counting one Advanced Higher taken in S6 as additional to the Higher taken in the same subject in S5 (as opposed to the current practice where Advanced Highers cancel out the same Highers) <p>Scottish applicants with qualifications other than Highers can also be afforded this flexibility.</p>
<p>Policy Statement:</p>	<p>Heriot-Watt University will use information provided by applicants on their UCAS form to identify individuals for additional consideration in our admissions process. These categories are listed in Appendices 1a and 1b and if applicants fall within either or both of them, they will be considered under this policy. We will prioritise applicants who are within these categories.</p> <p>If an applicant is recognised to be within at least one of the categories in Appendix 1a, and has achieved, or is predicted to achieve, our Access Threshold entry requirement outlined in Appendix 3, then such an applicant will receive a Guaranteed Offer at the Access Threshold.</p> <p>If an applicant is recognised to be within at least one of the categories in Appendix 1b, then whenever possible, the applicant will receive a Contextual Offer.</p> <p>Students who enter Heriot-Watt University under the Fair Access Admissions Policy shall receive additional support throughout their studies. This is outlined in the <i>Wider Access Strategy 2019-2023</i> and is also summarised below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated pathways of support (e.g. personal and peer-to-peer tutoring); • Opportunity to apply for enhanced financial support (including bespoke scholarship opportunities).
<p>Implementation:</p>	<p>It is the responsibility of the Registry Services Directorate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that applicants who are within these Fair Access Admission categories (Appendix 1a and 1b) are identified in the UCAS process; • Apply the Access Thresholds as outlined in Appendix 2 throughout the admissions process. • Apply Contextual Offers where applicants fall into one or more of the categories listed in Appendix 1b • Update the Student Record to <i>tag</i> students who are being considered under Fair Access Admissions Policy to ensure that they are identified as eligible for additional support to help them once they are Heriot-Watt University students. • Report on the volume of applicants which enter Heriot-Watt University under Fair Access Admissions. <p>It is the responsibility of the Recruitment Services Directorate to:</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote the Fair Access Admissions process to students, schools and colleges as part of their widening access recruitment activity; <p>It is the responsibility of the Student Learning Experience Committee to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annually monitor the effectiveness of the policy as part of the operational delivery of the <i>Widening Access Strategy 2019-2025</i> and take forward enhancements as required.
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Appendix 1a: Categories for Access Threshold Offers

The following table outlines the areas which Heriot-Watt University shall consider as part of an access threshold application as well as how this is identified:

Categories for a Access Threshold Offer	How this is identified
Live in an area within the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation lowest 20% (SIMD20)	Home postcode from UCAS form http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/SIMD
Are care experienced	Tick box on UCAS form (we may request that students provide Heriot-Watt University with additional evidence, and we suggest this is included in your personal statement and reference)

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Appendix 1b: Categories for Contextual Admissions Offers

The following table outlines the areas which Heriot-Watt University shall consider as part of a contextual admissions application as well as how this is identified in the process:

Categories for a Contextual Offer	How this is identified
Attend a LEAPS (Lothians Equal Access Programme For Schools) Group 1 school	Previous institution information on UCAS form
Attend a LEAPS (Lothians Equal Access Programme For Schools) Group 2 school <u>and</u> are LEAPS eligible	Previous institution information on UCAS form and the applicant's referee must include in their reference that the individual is LEAPS eligible https://www.leapsonline.org/node/1081
Attend a SHEP (Schools for Higher Education Programme) school	Previous institution information on UCAS form
Live in an area within the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD21-40)	Home postcode from UCAS form http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/SIMD
Are studying on the Scottish Wider Access Programme (SWAP)	Previous institution information on UCAS form and qualification details
Have caring responsibilities ¹	UCAS Form (we may request that students provide Heriot-Watt University with additional evidence and we suggest this is included in your personal statement and reference)
Estranged Students	Information provided on UCAS form as part of Personal Statement or Reference (we may request that students provide Heriot-Watt University with additional evidence)
In receipt of Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA)	Information provided on UCAS form as part of Personal Statement or Reference (we may request that students provide Heriot-Watt University with additional evidence)
Eligible for Free School Meals	Information provided on UCAS form as part of Personal Statement or Reference (we may request that students provide Heriot-Watt University with additional evidence)
Adverse Personal Circumstances	Information in the UCAS Personal Statement and/or Reference which demonstrates that the applicant has overcome significant difficulties in terms of serious illness, disability or bereavement which impacted on their ability to study will enable the application to be considered under this Policy.

¹ Anyone who cares unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support. Ordinarily this does not include parents and carers of children, the exception being where a child has particular care needs resulting from a disability.

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Appendix 2: Access Thresholds

If you are eligible for consideration for a guaranteed offer under contextual admissions, the following Access Thresholds² will be taken into account in the admissions process:

Qualification type	Access Threshold
Scottish Highers	BBBC Highers can be taken over two or three sittings Some programmes will require specific subjects, see course listing in on-line/print prospectus for details. NB a Foundation Apprenticeship can be substituted for one Higher
HNC	B in the graded unit and passes in all 15 units for entry to year 2 (where there is a recognised route from a relevant HNC qualification)
HND	BB in the graded units and passes in all 30 units for entry into year 3 (where there is a recognised route from a relevant HND qualification)
SWAP	The profile grades required vary between programmes, please see https://swapsurvey.org/progression/east for details
A-levels	BCC Some programmes will require specific subjects, see course listing in on-line/print prospectus for details.
BTEC level 3 Extended Diploma	Merit Merit Merit
Scottish Baccalaureate	Applicants with Scottish Baccalaureate qualifications will be considered on the basis of the individual Highers and Advanced Highers presented. Some programmes will require specific subjects, see course listing in on-line/print prospectus for details.
International Baccalaureate	Higher Level subjects will be required for entry and applications will be considered on an individual basis.

If you cannot see your qualification in the table above please contact us

² Heriot-Watt University are unable to accept UCAS tariff points for the Access Threshold or in place of the grades listed in this table

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Appendix 3: Access Thresholds

School	Department	Access Threshold (Scottish Highers)
EPS	Physics	BBBC (B in Maths and B in Physics)
EPS	Chemistry	BBBC (B in Maths and B in Chemistry)
EPS	Chemical Engineering	BBBC (B in Maths and B in Chemistry)
EPS	Brewing & Distilling	BBBC (Maths and a Physical Science)
EPS	Electrical Engineering	BBBC (B in Maths and B in Physics)
EPS	Mechanical Engineering	BBBC (B in Maths and B in Physics)
EPS	Combined Studies	BBBC (B in Maths and B in any Physical Science)
EGIS		
EGIS	Biology	BBBC (B in Maths or any Physical Science)
EGIS	Architectural Engineering	BBBC (B in Maths)
EGIS	Civil Engineering	BBBC (B in Maths)
EGIS	Construction Mgt. & Surveying	BBBC
EGIS	Urban Studies	BBBC
MACS		
MACS	Actuarial Mathematical & Statistics (all programmes)	ABBC (A in Maths)
MACS	Mathematics	BBBC (B in Maths)
	Mathematics with a Foreign Language	BBBC (B in Maths and B in Language to be studied)
	Mathematics with Physics	BBBC (B in Maths and Physics)
MACS	Computer Science and MEng Software Engineering	BBBC (B in Maths)
	Computer Systems and Information Systems	BBBC
TEX		
TEX	School-Wide	BBBC
SoSS		
SoSS	Management	BBBC
SoSS	Accountancy, Economics and Finance	BBBC
SoSS	Languages and Intercultural Studies	BBBC (B in Language of Study)
SoSS	Psychology	BBBC