



Higher Education Admissions Policy

Policy Number:

072-2022

Academic Year:

2025/2026 Onwards

Target Audience:

All Staff and Students

Summary of Contents

This Policy outlines the process the College will follow to ensure a consistent approach to Higher Education (HE) admission and enrolment of students into the College.

Enquiries

Any enquiries about the contents of this document should be addressed to:

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Review Information:

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No/~~Minor~~/Significant (delete as appropriate)

Approval/Noting By:

CMT: 22 October 2025

Lead GB Committee: Education Committee

Governing Body Approval: November 2025

Related Documents:

Higher Education Admissions SOP

Higher Education Accreditation of Prior Learning SOP

Higher Education Programmes SOP

Fees Policy

Complaints and Compliments SOP

Complaints and Compliments Policy

Superseded Documents (if applicable):

N/A

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May 2022

Date of Last Accessibility Screening:

March 2025



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1.0 Change History

Changes to this SOP are documented in Appendix 1 of this document. When reading electronic copies of this document, [you can click here to view the change history](#).

2.0 Purpose

SERC recognises the importance of admitting applicants to a course suited to their ability and aspirations. The admissions procedure takes account of all aspects of the application process, not just an applicant's academic profile to ensure equality of opportunity for all. SERC is committed to widening participation and to promoting wider access to Further and Higher Education.

All applications are considered without regard to any bias e.g. age, ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender, religious or political beliefs, marital status, care experience or socio-economic background.

SERC operates an online application process for all courses through its website www.serc.ac.uk. Applicants can use one of various social media accounts to register e.g. Facebook, Instagram. The online application portal will open for all Higher Education admissions in November each year.

SERC courses are also available through the UCAS system. Applications from those applying through the UCAS system are welcome in accordance with UCAS deadlines. SERC will also facilitate UCAS applicants via the Clearing system when results are released.

3.0 Scope

This Policy will apply to all higher education admissions at SERC. It will outline all aspects of the admissions process and will bring together the application and enrolment process.

This Policy will differentiate between those applicants applying directly through the College (Direct Entry) and those applying through the UCAS system.

This Policy meets the guidance of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Quality Code in maintaining effective quality assurance practices.

This Policy also meets Competition and Markets Authority guidance for Further & Higher Education and Awarding Organisation requirements.

4.0 Procedure

4.1 Higher Education Applicants

Applicants will apply online and receive an automatic acknowledgement email confirming receipt of their application.

All applicants will be invited to attend a mandatory pre-entry advice and guidance (PEAG) session, irrespective of their route of application, to complete an assessment e.g. an audition/submission of a portfolio / skills test. SERC's pre-entry advice and guidance sessions will take place between April and June each year, with follow-up sessions if

required being offered in August. UCAS applicants who apply before the date of equal consideration, will be called to attend a PEAG session before the end of March.

The College will communicate the outcome of these sessions via email within 5 working days (definitions below). Offers will be uploaded to the UCAS system for those who have applied through UCAS. UCAS applicants, who submit their application after the date of equal consideration, will be invited to attend a PEAG session with offers being communicated to UCAS and the applicant as per UCAS policy.

Full-time applicants are issued with either a Conditional Offer or, if they already meet the entry criteria, they will be moved to 'EnrolNoFees' status.

Part-time applicants who are eligible for enrolment, will be moved to 'Application Approved' status. Those who have been unsuccessful with their application will be referred to the Careers Team for further advice and guidance.

Applicants will be moved to 'Enrolled' status once they complete all finance checks (full time) or pay any associated fees (part time).

4.2 Admissions Criteria

The College reserves the right to enhance the entrance criteria for all courses based on demand and required academic standards as specified by the awarding body/validating organisation. The College will notify applicants in writing of changes to admissions requirements prior to the commencement of any programme of study with the exception of Open University (OU) Courses. Entry criteria for Open University Courses will be determined by SERC and will be reviewed on an annual basis. Entry criteria will not change for students who have already been offered a place on an OU validated programme.

All applications will be received in the English language and the applicant must be competent in same. The obvious exclusion from this is for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) provision.

4.3 Applicants with Additional Needs

The College welcomes applications from all learners who have a learning disability and / or difficulty. The College will make reasonable adjustments to ensure support for any applicant with a learning difficulty and/or disability to assist them in the admissions and enrolment process and in the progression and completion of their studies.

There may be times, however, taking into account the resources of the College, when the nature of a student's ill health or behaviour requires support and adjustments beyond the expertise or capacity that the College can reasonably offer.

The College reserves the right to refuse admission to an applicant who has been previously excluded from the College or partner organisations or who previously attended but failed to make sufficient effort towards successfully completing their studies. The College reserves the right not to admit an applicant who has any outstanding debts to the College.

5.0 Definitions

Type of offer or enrolment	Definitions
Conditional Offer	Applicant has attended pre-entry advice and guidance session but has yet to attain the required entry criteria. Applies to full-time applicants only
Application Approved	Applicant has attended pre-entry advice and guidance session and has met the entry criteria for the course. Applies to part-time applicants only
Further contact to follow	Applicant has attended a pre-entry advice and guidance session but is required to submit something further or attend a follow-up session
Entry requirements not met	Applicant has been unsuccessful in gaining a place on their chosen course
Enrolled	Applicant's place has been confirmed

6.0 Disclosure of Criminal Convictions

SERC is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all applicants, trainees and staff while they attend the College. SERC is also committed to making sure that there is an equality of opportunity for all applicants including those with criminal convictions.

To help the College fulfil its commitments, all applicants must declare whether they hold or have held any convictions at the time of their application. Such declarations will be dealt with via the Criminal Disclosure Procedure. Where appropriate a risk assessment and management plan will be completed and agreed with the applicant prior to the offer of a place on a course

7.0 Tuition Fees for Higher Education

Full time Higher Education students are required to provide evidence of how they will fund their studies at the point of enrolment. The College will issue document requests via email to each authorised student for either a Student Award Letter or a Direct Debit mandate as soon as the offer of a place has been issued.

Part time Higher Education students must pay any associated fees at the point of enrolment.

8.0 Complaints and Appeals

If an applicant wishes to lodge a complaint about the admissions process, they should be directed to the College's Complaints Process - Complaints Process.

9.0 Responsible Owner

It is the responsibility of Head of Admissions and Information Services to ensure that this policy is implemented, adhered to and reviewed.

10.0 Communication Plan

This Policy will be uploaded to the College intranet and referred to in staff induction and training.

11.0 Review

This Policy will be reviewed annually, or when the need for change has been identified.

Appendix 1: Document Change History

Version	Date	Change Detail
1.0	July 2023	Updated to new Accessibility Template
1.1	March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cover Sheet updated • Title – Head of Knowledge Management - changed to Head of Admissions and Information Services • All references to FE or Further Education Removed • Purpose, Scope and Procedure updated to include UCAS • Review changed to “Annually”
1.2	October 2025	No Changes