



**UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMY 92**  
MANCHESTER

## **CONTEXTUAL ADMISSIONS POLICY**

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		Guidance
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		Governance and Compliance
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1.1	28 <sup>th</sup> July 2021	Updating of job titles, areas of business.	Student Administration Assistant

1.2	August 2023	Scheduled review	Registrar/ assistant registrar

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## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 UA92 has in place a Contextual Admissions Offer Policy. This policy sets out the criteria used by UA92 in the decision-making process of a Contextual Offer and covers the individuals who may or may not be eligible for a Contextual Offer.
- 1.2 UA92 recognises that some educational and personal circumstances which are out of the applicant's control, can have an adverse impact affecting the achievement of the individual at the point of application to higher education. In order to maintain fairness and a holistic approach to all applications, the criteria used in the processing of a contextual offer may vary from one case to another.
- 1.3 UA92 seeks to attract students from all backgrounds as we believe a student community that reflects our society will be beneficial to all. Through application of this policy, UA92 seeks to identify applicants who have the greatest potential to succeed in higher education and benefit from the UA92's unique approach to the delivery of higher education.
- 1.4 UA92 employs a multi-dimensional approach, looking at a wide range of aspects to ensure that all applications are assessed fairly on individual merit and take account of those educational and personal circumstances, as appropriate. Each application is assessed on an individual basis and its own merit, taking into consideration a wide range of factors.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1 This policy applies to all applicants to UA92 courses, who meet one or more of the characteristics detailed below. These characteristics can have an adverse or negative impact on achievement prior to engaging in higher education (note: these are in no particular order):
- i. Home postcode in a low participation neighbourhood (POLAR 4, Quintile 1 and 2/Acorn CACI data);
  - ii. From a BAME background that is highlighted as having lower participation and attainment in Higher Education when compared to higher performing backgrounds;
  - iii. Mature students;
  - iv. Student declares a verified disability that is eligible for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA);
  - v. Have been in care at any point in their life;
  - vi. Have been a carer;
  - vii. Student is estranged from their family;
  - viii. Student is from any of the Gypsy, Traveller or Roma communities
  - ix. Student is a refugee;
  - x. Student is a child of a military family;

- xi. Attended a below average performing school or college in terms of attainment (<https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/>);
- xii. Student was eligible for Ever6 FSM (Free School Meals);
- xiii. Student is/was in receipt of a 16-19 bursary;
- xiv. Student is first in their family to attend higher education.

2.2 The indicators used to identify students experiencing any of the above must be valid and reliable. The average characteristics of individuals living in a given area do not always necessarily reflect the characteristics of specific individuals, therefore, UA92 assess individual applications on a case by case basis, considering a wide variety of factors, both listed in this policy and external to it.

2.3 At UA92, Admissions decision making is carried out on an individual basis with reference to the applicant's achievements to date. The operation of a contextual admissions process does not change this – applicants are still expected to demonstrate an aptitude for, and interest in their chosen subject area. This can be assessed in a variety of other ways including, but not limited to, personal statements and interviews.

### **3. Policy Statements**

3.1 Standard entry to UA92 programmes is as follow;

- i. Bachelors Degree 104 UCAS Points; and
- ii. Certificate in Higher Education (Cert HE) 64 UCAS Points.

3.2 The Certificate of Higher Education will allow students to experience university-level study, equivalent to the first year of a degree, gaining both subject knowledge and developing themselves through UA92's Target Talent Curriculum. Upon successful completion of the course, students can leave with a Certificate in Higher Education. Alternatively, they may wish to apply to progress to the full degree programme at UA92. This means they would have completed a full degree in the same amount of time as Bachelor's degree students.

3.3 In line with current UA92 procedures and as stated above, UA92 will continue to review all applications on an individual basis with reference to the academic grades (achieved and predicted), personal statement and academic reference. Applicants are required to demonstrate via their UCAS application, their interest in and commitment to, their chosen subject of study.

3.4 We will also continue to consider, individually, applicants who meet one or more of the characteristics which are considered under this policy. In order for UA92 to determine who meets the criteria, we would encourage anyone who feels that

they meet one or more of the criteria to contact us so we can clarify this and take it into consideration when assessing their application to study with us.

3.5 A Contextual Offer could mean that the applicant is;

- i. given additional consideration and will not be rejected solely on the basis of their predicted (or actual) grades. The additional consideration would require additional information from the applicant stating which of the criteria they meet. Following this, and any potential offer, applicants would be invited to an Applicant Visit Day;
- ii. made an offer which is lower than the typical offer for that programme. Contextual Offers are reflective of the individual's context and can result in a UCAS Tariff Point reduction.

3.6 Each application referred for a contextual offer will be assessed on an individual, case-by-case basis and will be reviewed by a panel. Their recommendation will then be confirmed by a senior member of UA92 staff before an offer is made;

3.7 If an applicant upon receipt of a contextual offer wishes to make a relevant complaint or appeal, they are entitled to do so in line with our Academic Complaints and Appeals Policy which can be found on the UA92 website.

3.8 Their work experience and professional experience/qualifications may be taken into consideration if the applicant is classed as a mature student.

3.9 Ultimately, the implementation of this policy is at the discretion of the UA92 Admissions Team.