



STUDENT ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT POLICY

Name of Document:	Student Admissions and Recruitment Policy
Responsible area:	Marketing and Admissions
Current version:	3
Date of last review:	January 2020
Last review by:	Marketing and Recruitment Officer
Policy Owned and approved by:	HEAT
Next review due date:	January 2021

Summary of changes to document

This document is now fully aligned with the new UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

Summary of Changes between previous and current issue	Page Number
1.1 Purpose	4
1.2 Scope	4
1.3 Equality and Diversity	4
2.2.2 Entry Requirements	6
2.2.4 Mature Students	7
2.3 BA (Hons) Top-up degree entry requirements	7
3.9 Use of agents	9
4.1 Application Process for HND Programmes (Step 5 HND)	9
4.2 Step 4 – Acceptance and Payment	10
4.2 Application Process for Top-up Degrees Programme	10
Step 4 – Offer Acceptance	10
4.3 Student Admissions Process HND– Flowchart (include conditional offer)	12
4.4 Student Admissions Process Top-up degrees Programmes – Flowchart	13
5.1 Induction Day	14
5.2 Enrolment	14
5.3 Refunds	14
6.4 Discrimination	15
6.1 Complaints and Appeals	16

Table of Contents

Section 1 – Introduction	3
1.1 Purpose	3
1.2 Scope	4
1.3 Equality and Diversity	4
1.4 Disability	4
1.5 Admission with Advanced Standing	5
Section 2 – Entry Requirements	5
2.1 Course Specific Entry Requirements	6
2.2 HND Entry requirements	6
2.3 BA (Hons) Top-up degree entry requirements	7
Section 3 – Student Recruitment	7
3.1 Provision of Information	7
3.2 Recruitment Activities	8
3.4 Use of Agents	8
Section 4 – How to Apply	9
4.1 Application Process for HND Programmes	9
4.2 Application Process for Top-up Degrees Programme	10
4.3 Student Admissions Process HND Programmes – Flowchart	12
4.4 Student Admissions Process Top-up degrees Programmes – Flowchart	13
Section 5 – Induction & Enrolment	14
5.1 Induction Day	14
5.2 Enrolment	14
5.3 Refunds	14
Section 6 – Complaints, Appeals and Discrimination	15
6.1 Complaints and Appeals	15
6.2 Process for an Appeal	15
6.3 Process for a Complaint	15
6.4 Discrimination	15
Section 7 – Monitoring & Confidentiality	16
7.1 Monitoring and Review of Policies and Procedures	16
7.2 DGHE Guidance on Confidentiality	16
7.3 Verification of an Applicant’s Identity	16
Section 8 – Accreditation of Prior Learning	17
8.1 Procedures for Accreditation of Prior Learning	18
8.2 Documentation and Evidence	18

DGHE STUDENT ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT POLICY

Section 1 - Introduction

This policy has been developed to ensure that the College practices a clear, fair, explicit and consistent admissions procedure and has been guided by the UK Quality Code,

The admission of students into and higher education courses at DGHE will typically include the following activities:

- promotion and marketing of courses to prospective students, their parents, employers and advisers
- identification and recruitment of prospective students to the College and specific programmes of study through, for example, open days; recruitment fairs seminars, etc.
- selection of applicants suitable for a particular programme
- assessment of suitability based on academic grounds, intentions of study, and fit with career aspirations
- conditional and/or unconditional offer of a place on a programme of study
- enrolment of students onto a programme of study
- induction and orientation of new students to the College, department and programme of study.

DGHE recognises that applicants will come from a wide range of backgrounds, and will demonstrate their potential to succeed in a variety of ways. There is often a need to make quite complex judgements about relative potential within a diverse population of applicants since the majority of students coming to DGHE have a prior education from another country.

The College endeavours to secure a good match between the abilities and aptitudes of the applicant and the demands of the programme, thus leading to the selection of students who can reasonably be expected to complete their studies successfully. The DGHE Admissions staff together with Course Leaders and tutors, where appropriate, will therefore choose between applicants, to determine who should be selected. This exercise of judgement is, whenever possible, underpinned by reference to transparent and justifiable criteria. The College's standard point of reference for the 'level' evaluation of an overseas qualification is UK NARIC (National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom). The College may also refer to 'in-country' British Council offices and accredited recruitment agencies for further advice. In addition, if evidence is provided that another 'recognised' institution has evaluated the said qualification then that too may be considered to demonstrate acceptable recognition of achievement. Finally, the College will regularly monitor and review its recruitment, admissions and enrolment policies and procedures and ensure that all those involved in admissions are competent to undertake their roles.

1.1 Purpose

DGHE admissions policy aims to:

- create a student body that is balanced and diverse in terms of cultural background and experience;
- recruit students with a genuine intention to study and fully complete their programme of study;
- recruit students who have the ability to successfully complete their chosen course, whatever their background;
- recognise the need for inclusivity, diversity and equal opportunity;
- ensure that disability does not prevent someone from making an application to or being accepted by DGHE and/or completing the course successfully.

The College will endeavour to achieve these aims by:

- encouraging applications from all those with the motivation and academic ability to succeed at DGHE;
- assessing each application on an individual basis and interview face-to-face wherever possible;
- offering places to applicants who have the potential to successfully complete their programme at DGHE;
- maintaining transparency in the recruitment and admissions process.
- agreeing with its partner institutions the appropriate minimum entry criteria that assure a prospective student's academic readiness for the programme-level applied for.

1.2 Scope

This document sets out the principles and practices of the recruitment, selection and admissions policy that applies to all applications for prescribed HE (funded) courses received by the College. This includes the following awards at level 4 HNC, level 5 HND, and level 6 Bachelor Degrees. In providing HE the College works with the following partner organisations:

- Pearson
- New College Swindon
- Buckinghamshire New University

In addition to the DGHE College Policies on this page, students studying under collaborative arrangements should be aware of the policies belonging to the partner institution (New College Swindon or Buckinghamshire New University) which will apply to them. These policies and procedures are published here:

For HND students:

<http://he.newcollege.ac.uk/students/policies>

For Top-up degree students:

<https://bucks.ac.uk/about-us/governance-and-policies/policies>

1.3 Equality and Diversity

Under the Equality Act 2010, DGHE tries to take a strategic approach to the promotion of disability equality, and to adapt policies and services to ensure that they take full account of disabled people (both students and staff/employees) by:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for disabled people
- Eliminating unlawful discrimination of disabled people
- Eliminating disability-related harassment
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encouraging participation by disabled people in public life
- Ensuring that text-to-speech options are available throughout the organisation

The college Equality and Diversity policy is applicable to all applicants, students and staff, the full policy can be found at <https://www.dghe.ac.uk/college/policies>

1.4 Disability

Applicants who have a Disability or Long-term Medical Condition:

DGHE welcomes applicants with disabilities and learning difficulties, and will endeavour to avoid artificial barriers to admission.

1. Applicants with disabilities and special needs are considered on the same academic grounds as all others. Applicants are asked to discuss their likely requirements with the college during the admissions process.
2. The welfare officers will provide advice concerning the suitability of the centre and the support available.
3. A decision may need to take into account any overriding health and safety concerns, barriers relating to professional requirements, or the College's ability, or inability, to make any necessary adjustments. Such cases will be addressed on an individual basis.
4. All students are encouraged to disclose their learning difficulty or disability during the admissions and registration process to ensure that adjustments and support can be put in place at the start of the programme. However, the College understands that in some instances students will develop health problems or disabilities after registration. In such cases students are encouraged to disclose to their welfare officers as soon as possible
5. Applicants who have disclosed a disability will be considered in the same way as any other applicant and a decision will be made that is based on academic merit and potential.

1.5 Admission with Advanced Standing:

A candidate may be able to gain exemption from part of the programme for which they have applied through the accreditation of prior learning (APL). The APL procedures can be found in section 8 of this policy.

Section 2 – Entry Requirements

It is the policy of DGHE to admit students who have serious academic, professional and/or vocational intentions and are able to demonstrate the potential to benefit from, and the ability to successfully complete its programmes.

Details of entry requirements for each programme of study are provided in the College's prospectus, website, Programme Specification and relevant Course Handbooks.

An appropriate level of English Language competence is required for all applicants. For those whose first language is not English this is normally measured through an IELTS score but other recognised qualifications will also be considered. Alternatively, the College's internal English test will suffice in determining an applicant's English language competence. Applications from candidates without the normal, formal qualifications will be considered on an individual basis and all aspects of an application will be taken into account when making a decision i.e. qualifications, work experience, personal statement, references, etc.

The College reserves the right to refuse admission to applicants who have not met entry requirements or where there is evidence that they are unable to meet the academic, professional or vocational requirements of the course, or have not demonstrated clearly that they hold serious study intentions.

Applicants who do not abide by the rules and regulations of the College, or who make fraudulent applications, including non-disclosure of information relevant to the application, will have their offer of a place withdrawn. Registrations based on fraudulent applications will normally be declared null and void and any fees paid will be non-refundable.

2.1 Course Specific Entry Requirements

Requirements for entry may vary according to course. In cases where courses are franchised from or validated by a University, admissions requirements will be set by or agreed with the University partner.

2.2 HND Entry requirements

2.2.1 Minimum General Entry Requirements:

Applicants must normally be at least 18+ years of age on admission to the College. For the purpose of this policy the date of admission is defined as the date on which the course commences.

2.2.2 Typical academic entry requirements for the BTEC HND:

- A level standard of education or equivalent
- Other UK level 3 qualifications (e.g. Foundation Diploma, Access to HE Certificate, a BTEC National, Advanced GNVQ or AVCE).
- Overseas Qualifications equivalent to Level 3 (e.g. Diploma de Bacalaurate, Brandos Atestas, Ensino Medio,etc)

2.2.3 Equivalent Qualifications:

The Admissions Officer will consult the NARIC database to ascertain equivalence between international and UK qualifications.

2.2.4 Mature students:

In exceptional circumstances, mature entry applicants (21+) without the standard academic background, but with relevant and substantial work experience (min 2 years), may be considered for entry. They will be interviewed by the Head of Admissions, undergo functional skills testing and will be required to submit two detailed references in support of their suitability for the programme. Such applicants must be able to demonstrate their readiness for a return to study and ability to cope with the rigours of the programme. Admissions decisions will be made on a case by case basis.

2.2.5 English Language Requirements:

Applicants for undergraduate programmes whose first language is not English will be required to demonstrate their ability to understand and express themselves in both written and spoken English sufficient for them to derive full benefit from and succeed in passing their chosen programme. The level required for entry onto the HND is typically an overall score of IELTS 5.5 or above.

2.2.6 DGHE English Test:

The College has developed its own internal English tests that are used to determine an applicant's level of English, for those who do not hold formal English qualifications, such as IELTS, TOEFL or GCSE, at the appropriate grades. In consideration of an applicant's eligibility for the HND course applied, as a minimum, they must achieve the equivalent of a B2 CEF level grade. To achieve this, they must obtain a minimum Writing score of 50/100 (50%), a minimum Grammar score of 25/50 (50%) and 60/100 (60%) in speaking and listening - generating an overall score of 55/100 which is equivalent to a B2 CEF level.

Applicants may be exempted from the DGHE test if they possess a recognised English language qualification such as IELTS 5.5 or GCSE English language, grade C or above.

2.3 BA (Hons) Top-up degree entry requirements

2.3.1 Minimum General Entry Requirements:

Applicants must normally be at least 18+ years of age on admission to the College. For the purpose of this policy the date of admission is defined as the date on which the course commences.

2.3.2 Typical academic entry requirements for the BA (Hons) Top-up:

- A Pass in a relevant BTEC HND; or
- a Foundation Degree; or
- a recognised UK or overseas equivalent; or
- other level 5 qualification in a related field

2.3.3 Equivalent Qualifications:

The Admissions Officer will consult the NARIC databases to ascertain equivalence between international and UK qualifications.

2.3.4 English Language Requirements:

Students whose medium of study at HND/FdA or equivalent qualification is not English are required to produce evidence of English language proficiency at IELTS: 6.0

Section 3 – Student Recruitment

3.1 Provision of Information

DGHE is committed to the provision of timely, accurate and appropriate pre-entry information and support to prospective students. Our recruitment and admissions activities are informed by a commitment to the provision of impartial advice and guidance and support for applicants to enable them to make informed decisions about David Game Higher Education as a study destination. The College ensures that staff involved in the marketing and admissions process have received training in consumer protection law and that they understand the importance of the accuracy of material information and pre-contract information according to the guidelines given to Higher Education institutions by the Consumer Markets Authority.

Information provision is guided by the following principles:

- **Accuracy:** The College is committed to providing accurate and detailed information on the nature of our courses, their structure, duration, modes of assessment, associated fees or additional costs. This information is maintained by recruitment and admissions staff working within Academic Schools to ensure that information remains current and is accurate at the point of enrolment.
- **Transparency:** To ensure transparency and consistency, DGHE maintains individual course information profiles accessible in multiple locations on the college website. The information includes: entry requirements, course specific selection and assessment criteria and processes, course structure, teaching and learning, coursework and assessment, fees, funding, attendance requirements, professional accreditation and employability outcomes.

3.2 Recruitment Activities

The Marketing department co-ordinates a number of activities which support recruitment to all the courses that are provided by the college. These activities take place on and off campus and are supported by the Admissions team.

Attracting prospective students

Prospective students may find out about the College through:

- a) advertisements
- b) college website, prospectus and UCAS website
- c) digital or printed media including leaflets, banners and brochures
- d) social media
- e) word of mouth and student referrals
- f) open days
- g) vetted agents

3.4 Use of Agents

The College works with reputable recruitment agents whose primary role is the promotion and marketing of the College's courses. Decisions on the entry to courses remain at the sole discretion of the College.

A clear and robust process is in place for the appointment of agents. This includes:

- Meeting the owner or manager of potential agent;
- Requesting references from their previous/current partner colleges/universities;
- Visits to the agent's office to audit its premises/location, knowledge and experience of staff and work ethics;
- Mandatory training for the Agent's recruitment staff

Agents who are appointed are typically offered a 12 month contract which sets out realistic targets for them to work towards. An Agent handbook is given to all agents to ensure they are clear and fully aware of the college's quality standards and the student code of conduct. In addition every agent needs to complete a questionnaire for each student it refers, summarising the steps it has taken prior to referring the student onto DGHE. This is required in order that the agent can demonstrate that they have acted with transparency and integrity. It also helps us determine if the agent is in compliance with the college's academic entry requirements, which includes a documents check list, English language ability assessment and the quality of information provided to potential students.

Agent evaluation is a core element to monitor agent's performance and a termly review is part of our continuous training. Training is provided by the Marketing Officer and is an important tool to evaluate quality of referrals, diversity and quantity as well as how improvements could be achieved. Poor quality referrals will lead to a termination of the contract with the agent. Agents who perform well and with whom we have established a long term relationship will have their contracts renewed. In addition, agents are required to complete the student/applicant questionnaire to ensure they fulfil David Game Higher Education quality standards.

Support for the agent can also be seen as a continuation of training therefore, regular communication is undertaken with agents in the form of:

- handbooks and manuals
- visits
- emails
- marketing materials
- updates on course content; fees
- phone calls

Section 4 – How to Apply

Candidates should read the prospectus and website thoroughly and select the course that is of interest to them. They should check that they meet the entry criteria and then contact the College (or approved representative) and arrange for an interview with an Admissions Officer who will assess their suitability for the course and also give further details on the syllabus, timetable, teaching and learning strategies, assessments, answer any questions they may have and offer guidance in making the correct choice.

4.1 Application Process for HND Programmes

Step 1: Apply

All applicants must first create an online portal account with David Game Higher Education and complete the online application form.

Step 2: Upload Documents

All applicants must upload the following documents on the portal:

- Examination transcripts (English translation where necessary), or notarised copies and English Language examination transcripts (where applicable)
- A copy of the Original Passport and; or Residence Permit/ National ID card
- CV
- Proof of Address (Bank Statement, household utility bill, current UK driving licence)
- A 300-500 word personal statement outlining the reasons for applying to the chosen programme, how you feel you will benefit from the programme of study, what contributions you will make to the College and how this will help your future career aspirations
- Employment reference letter (if applicable)
- Portfolio of artwork (if applicable)
- Photo (Passport style picture)

Step 3: Interview

An interview will be conducted with an Admissions Officer or by a member of the academic team. During the interview, information contained within the application form will be considered. Applicants must demonstrate they have the necessary skills for successful completion of the course, evidence of motivation and the commitment to succeed. If the applicant lives overseas, the interview will be conducted via Skype or by telephone at a mutually convenient place/time.

Step 4: Assessment Test

Applicants whose first language is not English, with no formal or recognised qualification, will be required to take the DGHE English Entry test to determine whether their level of English is appropriate for the course applied.

Step 5: Offer Acceptance and Payment

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application after completing steps 1, 2,3 and 4, on the assessment day.

If the application is successful, the applicant will be sent a formal '*Unconditional Offer*' letter via email. Once the applicant accepts the offer, they are entering into a legal contractual agreement with the College.

A '*conditional offer*' can be issued to an applicant with one or more outstanding conditions to be met. These can include for example, passing an English language test or providing an original copy of evidence referred to in their application form. After such conditions are met, the College will issue the Unconditional Offer letter.

Students will be required to pay the registration fees as follows:

- £250 upon enrolment for Year 1
- £100 upon enrolment for Year 2

If the application has been unsuccessful, the applicant will be informed accordingly via email and/or telephone and the reasons for their rejection kept on record, should they require feedback.

All offers are made subject to the college Terms and Conditions. These can be found at www.dghe.ac.uk/policies

4.2 Application Process for Top-up Degrees Programme

Step 1: Apply

All applicants must first create an online portal account with David Game Higher Education and complete the online application form.

Step 2: Upload Documents

All applicants must upload the following documents on the portal:

- Examination transcripts (English translation where necessary), or notarised copies and English Language examination transcripts (where applicable)
- A copy of the Original Passport and; or Residence Permit/ National ID card
- CV
- Proof of Address (Bank Statement, household utility bill, current UK driving licence)
- A 300-500 word personal statement outlining the reasons for applying to the chosen programme, how you feel you will benefit from the programme of study, what contributions you will make to the College and how this will help your future career aspirations
- Photo (Passport style picture)

Step 3: Interview

An interview will be conducted with an Admissions Officer or by a member of the academic team. During the interview, information contained within the application form will be considered. Applicants must demonstrate they have the necessary skills for successful completion of the course, evidence of motivation and the commitment to succeed. If the applicant lives overseas, the interview will be conducted via Skype or by telephone at a mutually convenient place/time.

Step 4: Offer Acceptance

If the applicant is successful in the interview, the applicant will be sent a formal '*Conditional Offer*' letter via email from the college. Successful applicants are also required to submit a UCAS application and the Head of Admissions will notify the collaborative partner (i.e. the university) about successful candidates.

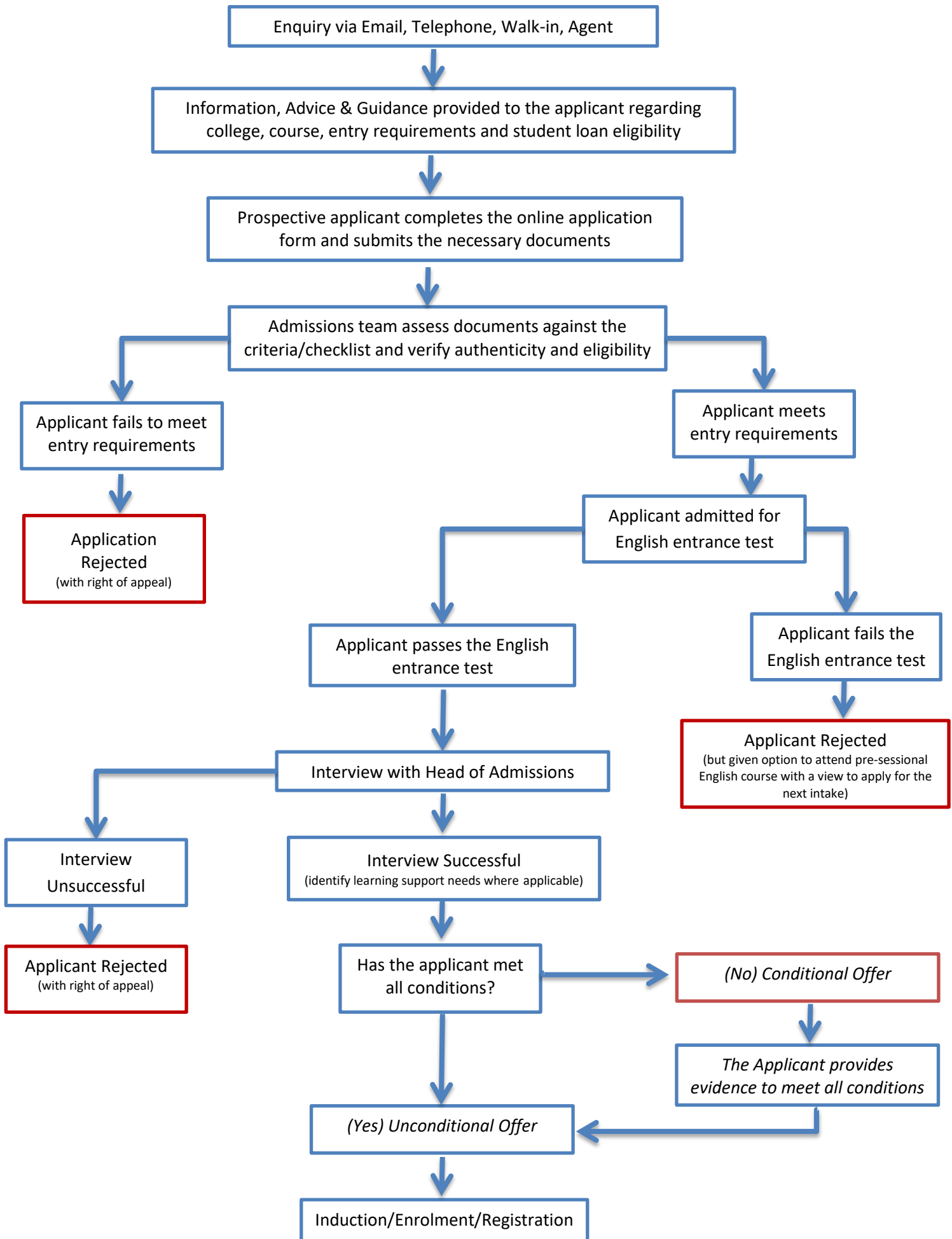
The University, on receipt of the application, will send an 'Offer '. This will be 'unconditional' if the applicants have met all the requirements.

Please note: Bucks New University reserve the right to request evidence of any qualification stated on an application form in order to confirm an unconditional offer for an applicant, all relevant documents must be provided.

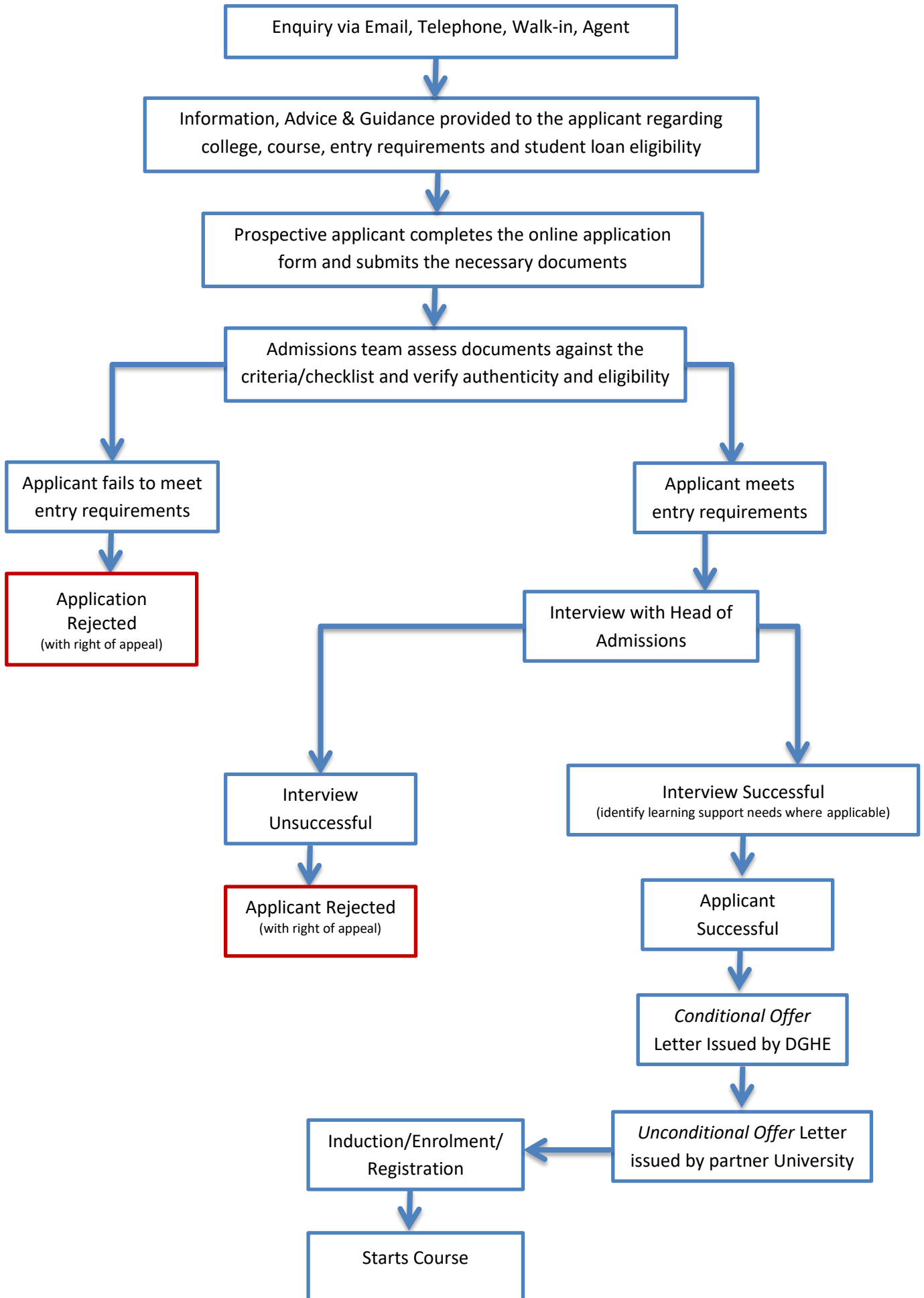
Bucks New University reserve the right to withdraw or reject any application found to contain misleading or false information. This information may also be shared with the UCAS verification team for further investigation and may result in other UCAS choices being contacted or the UCAS application being withdrawn entirely.

All offers are made subject to the college Terms and Conditions. These can be found at www.dghe.ac.uk/policies

4.3 Student Admissions Process HND Programmes – Flowchart



4.4 Student Admissions Process Top-up degrees Programmes – Flowchart



Section 5 – Induction & Enrolment

5.1 Induction Day

All pre-registered students will be invited to attend the College on the induction day to complete the enrolment on the programme of their studies. DGHE course leaders and admin staff will conduct an induction with students on the first day of their course, detailing the DGHE rules and procedures (such as: attendance, ID cards, Health and Safety and other). The course leader will also introduce the students to the department and their programme of study; provide information regarding the timetable, methods of assessment; avoiding academic malpractice, teaching and learning strategies, term dates, student responsibilities and other. On this day the students are provided with a folder including:

- Student Handbook
- Course Handbook
- Course Timetable
- Student Oyster card information
- Code of Conduct
- Student Welfare Services Handbook
- Student Services Guide
- NCS Charter (if HND student)

5.2 Enrolment

Students enrolling on a franchised/validated course under a collaborative partner will be asked to complete the university/college's enrolment/registration form which is then forwarded to the relevant partner. The college reserves the right to cancel and withdraw any application if the student does not attend the induction and there's no formal communication with the Admission Team.

Students enrolling on BTEC Courses will also be registered with Pearson and are also required to pay the registration fee on the week commencing their studies. The College Registration Fee covers the administrative costs incurred during the admissions process and is non-refundable. Once students are enrolled they will be issued with an ID card during the first week of their course and student's attendance confirmation will be confirmed with the SLC/Sub-contracting partner in order to release student loans.

5.3 Refunds

Eligibility: the College may make a tuition fee refund if the student:

- cancels their place within the 14 day cooling off period (see Terms & Conditions clause 19 for applicability);
- withdraws from his or her course of study;
- has made an overpayment (self-funding only);
- has their place terminated by the College (planned or unexpected);
- is affected by closure of a programme (planned or unexpected).

More information about Tuition fee refund and compensation can be found at www.dghe.ac.uk/policies

Note: DGHE does not provide accommodation but can advise students and provide information on where they can find suitable accommodation. International students can also speak to an Admissions Officer regarding UKVI compliance issues.

Section 6 – Complaints, Appeals and Discrimination

6.1 Complaints and Appeals

Every applicant has the right to ask for detail as to why his/her application has been rejected. Feedback should be requested by emailing admissions@dghe.ac.uk. All appeals and complaints will be thoroughly investigated by the Head of Admissions in collaboration with the Centre Director and a response given to the applicant, normally within two working weeks.

6.2 Process for an Appeal

As a first step, the applicant should check the entry criteria for the programme of study for which they have applied, either in the prospectus or on the College's website. If they believe that they meet, or will meet the criteria before the start of the course, they should contact the Admissions Office to ask for feedback. The relevant Admissions Officer will deal with the request. They may also need to meet UKVI requirements with regards to finance and study intentions as these issues may also have had a bearing on the application outcome. Similarly, if applicants are also dependant on a student loan, checks will be made for student finance eligibility.

If the applicant does not agree with the decision that has been made and has additional information that they believe is relevant to their application or if they believe that they have been treated unfairly in any way, they may write to the Centre Director to ask for their application to be reconsidered.

The Director will revisit the application, and, where necessary, consult with the relevant academic tutors or admissions staff before coming to a decision. Where an offer can be made, this will be processed through the Admissions Office in the normal way. Where the rejection is upheld, the Centre Director will write to the applicant, giving reasons for the decision.

If the applicant is unable to accept the decision of the Centre Director, they may appeal in writing to the 'Admissions Appeal Board', whose decision will be final.

6.3 Process for a Complaint

If an applicant has a complaint about any aspect of the admissions process other than the outcome of an application, they should write to the Head of Admissions who will consult with other staff, as necessary, and then respond to the applicant. If the applicant is still not satisfied, they may appeal in writing to the Centre Director.

6.4 Discrimination

The College is committed to eliminating unfair discrimination and the promotion of equal opportunities; although the College reserves the right to refuse (or to withdraw) admission to applicants whom it judges may constitute a present or future risk to staff, students or others.

Further information regarding the Admissions Appeal Board can be found at www.dghe.ac.uk/policies

Section 7 – Monitoring & Confidentiality

7.1 Monitoring and Review of Policies and Procedures

DGHE reviews its policies and procedures related to student admissions on an annual basis (or more frequently if necessitated by external/internal factors) to ensure that they continue to support its strategic objectives, and ensure that they remain current and valid in the light of changing circumstances.

7.2 DGHE Guidance on Confidentiality

DGHE confirms that applications are normally confidential between:

- i) the applicant
- ii) the College and its associated members within the 'college Group'
- iii) the referee(s) if appropriate
- iv) the relevant administrative staff at the College, including Admissions; Student Services and IT Support
- v) the applicant's previous school, College, employer, etc. (where appropriate)
- vi) the applicant's parents/sponsor, where appropriate
- vii) the relevant examination board or awarding bodies
- viii) banks, Student Loans Company, or other sponsoring body
- ix) the recruitment agent (if relevant) involved in the application, and
- x) other relevant agencies including QAA and the UKVI.

However, under all circumstance and at all times the College will work within the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

7.3 Verification of an Applicant's Identity

The College conducts identity checks for applicants in order to determine that their identity is genuine. When verifying an applicant's identity, the college usually requests for original documents to be seen, and or, performs random checks against external sources or databases relating to the document in question.

Applicants must also provide one form (an original) of photographic personal identification. Acceptable photographic personal identification documents should be one of the following:

- a valid passport, or;
- a national ID card

Section 8 – Accreditation of Prior Learning

The process of identification, assessment and formal acknowledgement of prior learning and achievement is commonly known as 'accreditation'. The term 'accreditation of prior learning' is used to encapsulate the range of activity and approaches used formally to acknowledge and establish publicly that some reasonably substantial and significant element of learning has taken place. Such learning may have been recognised previously by an education provider, (e.g. 'prior certificated learning'); or it may have been achieved by reflecting upon experiences outside the formal education and training systems (e.g. 'prior experiential learning').

Although not an exhaustive list, the accreditation of prior learning is typically described under one or more of the following headings:

- accreditation of prior learning (APL);
- accreditation of prior certificated learning (APCL);
- accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL);
- accreditation of prior certificated and/or experiential learning (AP[E/C]L);
- accreditation of prior learning and achievement (APL&A).

These approaches typically include policies and practices designed to accredit learning and achievement that occurred:

- and has been previously assessed and certificated;
- in a work/community-based or related setting, but is not a formal part of that experience;
- at some time, prior to the formal HE programme on which an applicant is about to embark;
- concurrent with participation in a HE programme, but is not a formal part of that experience;
- through experience and critical reflection, but was not part of a formal learning programme.

The theme common to all of the illustrative activities above, which must be properly considered for accreditation, is learning. It is the achievement of learning, or the outcomes of that learning, and not just the experience of the activities alone, that is being accredited.

Whenever and wherever the experience occurred, formal evidence must be presented to demonstrate that learning has taken place. The following procedures are adopted by DGHE and mirror the policy on recognition of prior learning (RPL) from our awarding body, Pearson. Therefore the following is applicable to all forms of APL:

1. Credit will only be awarded on the basis of evidence of relevant learning not just experience alone.
2. APL applications for the purpose of module exemption will only be considered following the applicant being offered a place on the programme.
3. Decisions to award specific credit and therefore to exempt students from modules will be based on the identification, description and assessment of equivalence of APL learning outcomes to specified module learning outcomes.
4. Judgment about the equivalence of APCL and APEL to admissions criteria, module, or stage outcomes will take into account the principles of relevance, level, authenticity, currency and sufficiency.
5. Students will be assessed with equality and fairness and there shall be transparency in all processes and decisions.
6. No module exemptions will be granted where these are not permitted by the relevant awarding body.

8.1 Procedures for Accreditation of Prior Learning

There are a total of 6 stages to follow when a student is claiming accreditation of prior learning. The first 2 stages, which carry out the initial requirements, are the responsibility of the Admissions Department and are therefore contained within this policy. Upon successful progression of the stages outlined below, Admissions will then proceed to liaise with the Head of School to ensure the remaining stages are completed.

Full details on the remaining 4 stages are outlined in **Section 5.5, of the Assessment and Internal Verification Policy.**

Stage 1: Awareness, information and guidance

The admissions team will establish if there is a potential APL when assessing a candidate.

If an APL is identified, the admissions team will discuss with the candidate the process, and provide guidance on the following:

- Process of claiming a unit
- Support and guidance available in the College
- Average period of time for the APL process to be completed, and costs associated with the process.

Applications for APL should, wherever possible, be submitted at the same time as the application for a place on a programme of study. The offer of a place on the programme shall be separate from that concerning APL and this shall be made clear to the applicant in the offer letter.

Stage 2: Pre-assessment, gathering evidence and giving information

In addition to the APL application form, applicants for APCL must include in the application certificated copies of any certificates and curriculum information obtained which form part of the application. Any document not in English should be accompanied by a certified translation. All documents will be returned to the student following completion of the evaluation process.

8.2 Documentation and Evidence

The admissions team can only register the student when they have officially started to gather evidence. When the student has gathered sufficient evidence the academic team needs to create an assessment plan. The evidence gathered needs to meet the standards of the unit, or part of a unit, that the evidence is being used for.

In addition to the APEL application form, applicants seeking module exemptions on the basis of APEL shall engage in a professional dialogue with the Head of School, and submit the relevant evidence that:

- (a) Describes in detail the prior learning or experience;
- (b) Describes how the prior learning or experience gained is relevant to the credit or exemption applied for;
- (c) Describes how the prior learning or experience gained has achieved the learning outcomes and objectives of the module(s) concerned;
- (d) Provides satisfactory evidence of the prior learning or experience. This may include:
 - (i) examples of work undertaken,
 - (ii) reflective accounts of learning,
 - (iii) videos of performance,
 - (iv) testimony of employer, colleagues, clients, etc.
 - (v) narrative account of learning gained,
 - (vi) training certificates