

ADMISSIONS POLICY

All policies referred to in this document are available on the University of Suffolk website under [Our Policies and Procedures](#).

Admissions Principles

1. The University of Suffolk is committed to ensuring an inclusive approach to people aspiring to higher education and aim to provide higher education to anyone with the potential to benefit. We accept students with a wide range of educational experiences and qualifications.

Aims

2. We aim to:

- Welcome breadth of study and experience.
- Promote and actively encourage increasing participation in higher education from under-represented groups including those with disabilities, minority ethnic groups, mature people and applicants with vocational qualifications.
- Welcome applications from students who come from families new to higher education and encourage this through our outreach activities.
- Ensure students have sufficient depth of knowledge and understanding where particular subjects are required.
- Actively promote equality and diversity in our admissions processes.

Transparency

3. The University operates a transparent admissions policy as detailed in this document. We are committed to providing clear, consistent, easily understandable and accessible information regarding entry requirements, selection procedures, and conditions of offer and fees which will support students in making an informed decision about their course.

4. Entry requirements are reviewed annually and published on the [University of Suffolk website](#).

5. Feedback on admissions decisions is available to applicants on request.

Consistency

6. All admissions decisions are taken in line with the University of Suffolk's Admissions Aims and the procedures set out in this document. Some procedures may vary to meet the particular requirements of some subject areas, but they are based on the underlying principles of transparency, consistency and fairness.

7. Our Schools support the publication of information/entry profiles for each course, which are available in Definitive Course Records (DCRs) and on the [University of Suffolk website](#).

8. All staff involved in the administration of admissions and/or selection and interview of applicants undergo relevant training.

Monitoring

9. The University regularly monitors and reviews its Admissions policies and procedures so that they are fit for purpose. Entry requirements are reviewed and discussed on an annual basis by the School Executives, with recommendations submitted to the Portfolio Oversight Committee and the Executive for approval.

10. Application and offer levels are reviewed and monitored monthly by the School Executives and Portfolio Oversight Committee during the standard UCAS Cycle. Throughout the Clearing Period, the Recruitment Planning Group meets regularly to support this monitoring.

Admissions Criteria

11. Admissions staff will be expected to use professional judgement in assessing the academic potential of individual candidates. In exercising their judgement, Admissions staff must operate in a way that is consistent with the University of Suffolk Admissions Aims. Admissions Selectors treat each application to the University individually and will normally consider the following information when making offers for undergraduate study, including:

- Academic ability and potential as shown in the qualifications section on the application form.
- Predicted grades for qualifications yet to be taken.
- Personal statement and reference(s) as indications of ability, motivation and potential, alongside information about personal circumstances and contextual social and cultural information.
- Related work or voluntary experience showing commitment to a chosen career (particularly important for courses with a vocational route).
- Extenuating circumstances, whereby factors beyond the applicant's control have caused the applicant to perform less well in their coursework or examinations than they might otherwise have been expected to do.
- Portfolio/audition/interview performance where applicable.

12. Applicants to certain vocational or professional courses may be required to pass an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and/or to demonstrate medical fitness to

practice prior to being admitted. This is to comply with the requirements of relevant professional bodies. Applicants will be advised if these or any other conditions apply when they are made an offer of a place.

13. The University of Suffolk may request a DBS or medical fitness check for other courses as part of the admissions process and because of information provided as part of the application or during the application process.

14. When assessing an application for postgraduate study, Admissions Selectors will normally consider:

- Applicants who hold an undergraduate degree or an equivalent qualification.
- Evidence of relevant personal, professional and educational experience.

15. Post registration professional courses require applicants to have prior academic study or experience at the appropriate professional level.

Entry Requirements

16. To ensure that applicants for admission are appropriately qualified for their programme of study and to ensure high standards of fairness and consistency, the University maintains a record of minimum entry requirements for all courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level. All Admissions staff will be required to adhere to these requirements.

17. Applicants for all programmes are required to hold GCSE English and Mathematics at Grade 4/C or above (or appropriate Level 2 equivalents, unless excluded within the course requirements) as well as the minimum Level 3 course requirements. Some courses may have additional GCSE requirements, which will be detailed in the Definitive Course Record (DCR), the prospectus and the University of Suffolk website.

18. Applicants who do not hold these minimum GCSE requirements will be considered on an individual basis based upon their overall application and the course applied for.

19. Applicants to professional health courses will be required to have five GCSEs at grade C/4 or above including English, Mathematics and (in some instances) Science as well as the minimum Level 3 course requirements. For some courses equivalent Level 2 qualifications may be accepted; specific details are provided within the course entry requirements on the University of Suffolk and UCAS websites.

20. Applicants to DipHE, Foundation Degree or Honours Degree courses, who are under the age of 21, will need to fulfil the general minimum entry requirements detailed in points 16 - 26 and any specific course requirements as detailed in the DCR, the prospectus or on the University of Suffolk website.

21. It is normally expected that applicants will have had two years' experience of post-16 study.

22. Applicants over the age of 21 should also see the paragraph entitled ***Mature Applicants***.

Honours Degree courses – minimum entry requirements

23. To ensure sufficient depth of knowledge and understanding we normally require applicants to have achieved a minimum of two A-Levels (GCE) or equivalent Level 3 study.

24. Certain courses will require a particular level of performance in a subject at GCSE, A-level or other examinations. These subject-specific requirements will be specified on the course pages of the [University of Suffolk website](#).

25. Equivalent awards include BTEC/OCR Diplomas, Nationals and Certificates; Level 3 CACHE Diploma; Vocational A level (double award), T Levels and Access to Higher Education Courses.

Foundation Degree - minimum entry requirements

26. Generally, applicants will be required to have achieved a minimum of one A-Level (GCE or VCE) or equivalent Level 3 study.

Postgraduate taught courses – minimum entry requirements

27. To ensure sufficient depth of knowledge and understanding we normally require applicants to hold an undergraduate degree or an equivalent qualification. Evidence of relevant experience will also be considered by Admissions Selectors.

Postgraduate research courses – minimum entry requirements

28. Our research degrees are awarded by the University of Brighton. The minimum admissions requirements are those set out in the University of Brighton's Code of Practice for Research Degrees. The Graduate School will provide selectors and supervisors of postgraduate research students with this Code of Practice in addition to the provision of Supervisory Training every three years. The minimum entry requirements for applicants for postgraduate research degrees are a Bachelors (Honours) degree, graded at 1 or 2:1, awarded by an institution or body with degree awarding powers in the UK or equivalent from a recognised overseas institution.

International Baccalaureate, Scottish, Irish and other Qualifications

29. We welcome applications from candidates with a wide range of qualifications, including Scottish Highers, the Irish Leaving Certificate, and the International Baccalaureate. For further information about entry requirements, please contact the Admissions Office or UCAS.

International Students

30. The University welcomes applications from international students. International students must have entry qualifications equivalent to the general requirements for admission in accordance with UK ENIC (National Information Centre) equivalences. The Admissions Office can advise on the equivalence of qualifications where requested.

31. For students requiring a visa, the University will assess each Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) request on its individual merit including through the review of relevant documentation (i.e. financial bank statements), and through a pre-CAS interview to determine an applicant's intention to study. We are required to meet strict UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) conditions (<https://www.gov.uk/student-visa>). There are a number of circumstances where the University may be unable to sponsor a student by issuing a CAS. These include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Failure to provide the University with the necessary personal information (including, but not limited to bank statements/other financial documents to demonstrate sufficient funds as defined by the UKVI) to produce a CAS;
- Failure to pay a CAS deposit for a course of study;
- The proposed course of study does not satisfy UKVI Student Visa requirements;
- The student does not have valid leave to be in the UK at the time the CAS is requested;
- If the applicant/student has submitted documents which are proven or suspected to be fraudulent.
- Where the applicant has failed to demonstrate clear intentions and motivation to study in the UK at a pre-CAS interview, or through behaviour demonstrated throughout the application process;
- The University believes sponsorship will put the sponsor licence at risk;
- The University believes that a visa application will not be successful. Grounds for this may include (but are not limited to) inadequate information, a history of visa refusals, insufficient funds, overstaying, language ability or on the basis of the applicant's criminal history.

32. Applicants should note that an academic offer for study is not a guarantee that a CAS will be issued.

33. International students should be aware that University of Suffolk will report to the UKVI any student who is issued with a CAS, but does not enrol, misses classes, stops attending, or defers their place in accordance with the University of Suffolk [General Regulations \(Students\)](#), [Student Attendance and Engagement Monitoring Policy](#) and [Tuition Fee Policy](#)

34. University of Suffolk reserves the right to refuse admission to international students who do not hold a valid visa for the duration of their studies.

Applicants studying on other visa permissions including UK-domiciled

35. Under our visa sponsor duties, we are required by the UKVI to ensure that all students have the right to study with us. Applicants under immigration control in the UK will be required to provide us with evidence of their passport and BRP or Share Code (where applicable).

36. If it is deemed necessary by the team assessing an application, permission may be requested from the applicant to contact the Home Office (UKVI) to check particular aspects of their UK immigration history. No application to the Home Office will be made for information for that purpose without the consent of the applicant, but the University may be unable to proceed with an application if consent is withheld. All information received will be used for the purpose of making an admissions decision, including where used for fee assessment purposes, and retained on the student's records held by the University.

English Language

37. All students are expected to be able to understand and express themselves in both written and spoken English. Students whose first language is not English will be expected to undertake a recognised English Language test in advance of commencing a University of Suffolk course, see paragraph 39 for further detail.

38. Applicants must have competence in English language and a Grade C/4 GCSE or an equivalent qualification is normally required.

39. Those students whose first language is not English and they do not meet the requirements of paragraph 38, will be required to demonstrate their English Language proficiency. Applicants who require a visa should check the UKVI requirements to ensure that they choose an appropriate test. English Language [requirements](#) are published on the University of Suffolk website and may vary between courses.

Recognition of Prior Learning

40. We recognise that experience counts and offer the Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) and Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL) as processes that allow applicants to gain recognition for skills or qualifications gained through previous study, at work or elsewhere. RPEL and RPCL can help the applicant gain credit towards a wide range of qualifications and may reduce the period of study time necessary to obtain their chosen award. Consideration for admission based on RPL will be given in accordance with the [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#).

Entry to Second or Third Year of Programme

41. Applications can be considered for direct entry to the second or third year of an undergraduate programme via the Recognition of Prior Learning process as outlined in paragraph 40.

42. Applicants will be expected to have the standard entry requirements for the course as well as the appropriate number of higher education credits.

Mature Applicants

43. The University of Suffolk welcomes applications from people over the age of 21 and, while usually expecting applicants to meet the minimum entry requirements for study, offers a flexible admissions policy which takes into account life and work experience for all courses with the exception of Professional Health programmes and BA (Hons) Social Work. Undergraduate applicants will usually need to provide evidence of successful recent study at Level 3 (i.e. A Level or equivalent) in relevant subjects, or relevant professional qualifications or experience. Applicants with no recent experience of studying may be advised to take an Access to Higher Education course or other preparatory study first.

Applicants Under the Age of 18 on Commencement of Studies

44. The University will accept applications made by individuals who will be under the age of 18 at the start of their chosen course of study where they meet the minimum entry requirements for study. However, such applicants are legally considered to be 'minors' under English law, and the University therefore has an *enhanced duty of care* until their 18th birthday. It is important that individuals under the age of 18 and their parents/guardians understand that the University community and campus is predominantly an adult environment, and the University does not take on the rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians in relation to those under 18. Further details of the admissions process for applicants under the age of 18 can be found in Appendix 1. In addition, the University's policy on Safeguarding can be found on the [University's website](#).

Deferred Entry

45. We recognise the advantages that some students can gain from a 'gap year', and our Admissions Office is happy to discuss deferred entry with applicants. Applicants who would like to defer entry should indicate this in their application. It is also recommended that they outline briefly on the personal statement their reason for choosing deferred entry. Applicants will usually be considered on the same basis as applicants for the current year of entry and receive correspondence from UCAS and the University of Suffolk during the application timetable for that year.

Criminal Convictions

46. The University aims to provide a supportive and positive environment for learning and teaching and follows the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidelines on the declaration of Criminal Convictions.

47. Applicants to certain courses¹ are required to inform the University of any relevant unspent criminal convictions during the application process. A relevant criminal conviction would usually include convictions, cautions, reprimands, bind-over order or similar involving one or more of the following:

- any kind of violence including (but not limited to) threatening behaviour, concerning the intention to harm or offences which resulted in actual bodily harm;
- offences listed in the Sex Offences Act 2003;
- the unlawful supply of controlled drugs or substances where the conviction concerns commercial drug dealing or trafficking;
- offences involving firearms;
- offences involving arson;
- offences listed in the Terrorism Act 2006.

48. In addition to any relevant unspent convictions, students on professional courses and courses involving contact with children and/or vulnerable adults will also be required to declare spent convictions, cautions and bind-over orders which will not be filtered under Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) guidelines. These students will also be required to undergo an Enhanced DBS check, including a check of the child and/or adult barred list and/or local police check from any countries you currently or have previously resided in as appropriate,

¹ Students on any courses involving contact with children and/or vulnerable adults, all courses at one of the Partner Colleges (due to the presence on campus of FE students under the age of 18 years), and any students who require a UKVI Student Visa to study in the UK or who require a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) extension to continue their studies, will be required to declare any relevant unspent criminal convictions.

49. Applicants are informed via UCAS, the direct application form, the University of Suffolk website and other course related information where they are required to declare any relevant criminal convictions, including spent convictions and cautions (including verbal cautions) and bind-over orders that will not be filtered under DBS guidelines, in addition to any relevant unspent convictions.

50. Individuals who require a UKVI Student visa to study in the UK are required to disclose any criminal record(s), including spent convictions and may be required to provide an official local police check from any countries you currently or have previously resided in, at the time of applying for their Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS). A declaration may result in the University being unable to issue a CAS in accordance with paragraph 31.

51. Where a declaration is required, the following advice is given to applicants:

- Depending on the course, remember that only relevant criminal convictions have to be declared.
- Be honest about your criminal convictions on application and enrolment forms.
- Applicants who declare a conviction will not automatically be excluded from the application process.
- Information is treated in the strictest confidence and is shared only with appropriate staff on a need to know basis.
- If a criminal conviction is not declared and subsequently becomes known, this will be considered to be a breach of the Terms and Conditions of Offer and could result in removal from the course.
- Any student who acquires a relevant criminal conviction during their course of study is required to make this known to the Academic Registrar. This may result in students being removed from the course.

52. Individuals applying for courses where a declaration of any criminal convictions is not a specific requirement are encouraged to share any restrictions or probation orders that may have a direct impact on their studies in order that relevant support can be put in place.

53. Any criminal convictions, restrictions or probation orders that are declared will be considered by the Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions Panel.

54. Further details about the procedures for Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions are set out in Appendix 2.

Interviews

55. In addition to meeting the academic entry requirements, applicants for some courses, such as arts, health, social work and courses with a work placement, will be required to attend an interview or portfolio review as part of the selection process.

56. Some courses may offer interviews in order for applicants to be made a reduced or unconditional offer. Interviews may also be requested on an individual basis by the Admissions Office, and some courses may carry out informal interviews as part of the application process to ensure applicants completely understand the course.

57. All applicants to our postgraduate research degree programmes must be interviewed before a place can be offered. Interviews are normally carried out by at least two members of University staff who have received selection and admissions training. At least one of these will have supervised a PhD to completion.

58. Where an interview is required, applicants will receive details of the selection procedure in advance to ensure sufficient time for preparation. Applicants with additional needs are invited to stipulate any additional requirements on their interview response.

59. It is usually expected that applicants will attend the initial interview date offered as alternative dates are not always available. Where an applicant is unable to attend they should contact the Admissions Office as soon as possible to discuss appropriate options. The University of Suffolk is unfortunately unable to guarantee that an alternative date will be available, where this is the case, applicants will be advised accordingly.

Offers of Study

60. Offers are usually expressed on the basis of UCAS tariff points and will include both completed and pending qualifications (usually accumulated over two years of post-16 study).

61. Within any offer, a pass at a particular grade and/or in a particular subject may be required, or tariff points from a particular subject may be limited.

62. Some courses may use methods such as assessment of predicted grades, reviewing of personal statements and/or references, written tasks or interviews to consider applicants for a reduced or unconditional offer for study. Criteria for reduced or unconditional offers will be agreed at School level at the beginning of each academic year.

63. Making an offer for study, which is subsequently accepted, is the creation of a contract between the University of Suffolk and the applicant. Only trained Admissions Selectors are therefore able to make a formal offer of study to applicants. The Graduate School will make offers to postgraduate research students following approval by the University of Suffolk Postgraduate Research Committee.

64. Where an applicant does not meet the entry requirements and/or have a successful interview for their original selected programme of study but does meet the requirements for an alternative related programme either at point of the initial application or at confirmation, the University may make an offer or consider the application for an alternative course. The University will contact the applicant by email to request that they confirm interest in the new course. Applicants are under no obligation to accept the alternative offer, and should consider their options carefully before doing so.

65. The University reserves the right to amend or withdraw an offer of a place based upon (but not limited to) the following:

- If the student is subsequently found to have made false statements, submitted falsified or fraudulent documentation, provided inaccurate information, or omitted significant information, including criminal convictions, during the application process;
- On the basis of information provided to the University after an offer has been made (i.e. via a reference or DBS certificate).
- If the applicant or student is found to have contravened the [University of Suffolk General Terms and Conditions of Offer for Applicants](#) as set out in their original offer email.

66. The University of Suffolk may report any application, or associated documents, it suspects to be fraudulent to the UCAS Verification Unit.

67. The University may convene an Admissions panel to consider the suitability of any applicant to join the course at any stage of the admissions process. In this case, the applicant will be invited to submit a statement for consideration.

Applicants wishing to Reapply or Return to Study

68. Applicants who are unsuccessful for their chosen course must wait one application cycle before reapplying for the same programme.

69. Applications will be considered against the current academic requirements for the year of entry. The University of Suffolk may draw upon information submitted or considered as part of a previous application, or any previous enrolment (including accordance with the University's

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (RPL) and relevant assessment regulations) when assessing suitability for study.

70. Previous students of the University of Suffolk are advised to check the University RPL Policy, and relevant assessment regulations when considering a return to study in order to confirm their eligibility.

71. Individuals with outstanding tuition fee debts to the University will not be considered for entry until these debts have been cleared, or an appropriate payment plan has been agreed with the University of Suffolk Finance Department.

72. Previous students of the University of Suffolk who have been withdrawn from a programme leading to Professional registration for academic reasons including academic failure or misconduct; for reasons relating to fitness to practice or if their course leads to professional registration with a PRSB and they have already been awarded an exit award (which is considered a final award) may not be eligible to reapply

Academic Study Support

73. The University of Suffolk is committed to supporting students to enable them to succeed in their studies. Academic Study Support is available to applicants within the University of Suffolk induction programmes prior to course start dates to assist individuals in preparing for study.

Progression Agreements

74. Progression Agreements provide an effective way for Further Education Colleges, Schools and Diploma Consortia to work together in a way which facilitates greater understanding of learners about the choices available to them at a higher education level. Progression Agreements may include a lower or unconditional offer being made in recognition of engagement between the applicant and the University of Suffolk. To find out if a Progression Agreement exists between your current place of study and the University please contact the [University of Suffolk Student Centre](#).

Additional Support Needs

75. The University of Suffolk welcomes applications from students with additional needs and will make every reasonable effort to meet their needs to enable them to study at the University. Applications from individuals with disabilities and/or additional needs are considered on their academic merits in line with all other applications. We would encourage all applicants to view the [University of Suffolk Disability Statement](#) for more information.

76. Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their likely additional support requirements with the University as early as possible to ensure that consideration can be given to any arrangements that may need to be put in place. The University of Suffolk, through its Student Services department, is committed to providing on-going support with the focus on providing accessible services and supporting students to complete their courses as independently as possible.

Applicant Behaviour

77. The University of Suffolk expects that all interactions between applicants, representatives of applicants, students and staff are conducted with courtesy and respect. Inappropriate behaviour towards members of the University community is not tolerated. Examples of inappropriate behaviour include hostile or aggressive behaviour, or the act of offering a bribe or financial inducement. Such behaviour is viewed very seriously and may prejudice the further consideration of an application, appeal or complaint. Applicants will usually be warned by the University when their conduct is such that action is being considered, however in exceptional cases (e.g. where a threat is made to a member of staff), then no warning need be given before action is taken.

Course Validation

78. Courses that are listed as *subject to validation* are new courses that are presented with indicative course content on the University of Suffolk website. Applicants who apply for a course that is subject to validation will be contacted as soon as reasonably practical, when the validation decision has been made.

79. Courses that are validated

- Applicants will be provided with complete information about the course, including core modules, award title and assessment methods.
- If, as a result of the detailed course information, you wish to withdraw your application:
 - You must notify the University in writing or through UCAS, within 14 days of receiving written notification of the change;
 - If you would like to be considered for another course, the University will use its reasonable endeavours to provide a suitable alternative course within the University (for which tuition fees may be payable) or suggest a suitable alternative course with an alternative provider;
 - The University will provide you with a full refund of any deposit or tuition fees paid.

80. Courses that are not validated

- Courses may not be validated if the suggested content does not meet external, professional, accrediting or other regulatory body requirements. In this circumstance, the

University will provide you with a list of suitable alternative courses within the institution, inviting you to confirm in writing within 14 days (of receiving written notification) if you would like to be considered for the alternative(s).

- If you do not contact the University within 14 days to confirm that you would like to be considered for an alternative course, your application will be withdrawn and you will be contacted by the University to confirm that this has taken place.
- If the University of Suffolk does not have any suitable alternative courses available, the institution will use its reasonable endeavours to suggest a suitable alternative course with an alternative provider and will provide you with a full refund of any deposit or tuition fees paid.

Course Re-approvals

81. All University of Suffolk courses undergo a cycle of review, with a re-approval event held for each course usually every five years. This regular review ensures that course teams can update courses to meet industry standards, and include new modules that enhance the student academic experience, and that respond to student feedback. Courses that are subject to re-approval may therefore have changes made to modules and assessments, and these changes will be communicated to applicants.

82. Courses that are subject to re-approval are existing University of Suffolk courses that are undergoing a normal cycle of review. The course content published on the University of Suffolk website is accurate for the previous entry year and will be provisional content for the application entry year. Course information on the University of Suffolk website will clearly state if this information is likely to change, and applicants will be notified when the updated course documents are available.

83. If, as a result of any changes to the material information you wish to withdraw your application:

- You must notify the University in writing or through UCAS, within 14 days of receiving written notification of the change;
- If you would like to be considered for another course, the University will use its reasonable endeavours to provide a suitable alternative course within the institution (for which tuition fees may be payable) or suggest a suitable alternative course with an alternative provider;
- The University will provide you with a full refund of any deposit or tuition fees paid.

84. It is very unlikely that a course will not be re-approved, but this may happen if the suggested content does not meet external, professional, accrediting or other regulatory body requirements.

In this circumstance, the University will provide you with a list of suitable alternative courses within the institution, inviting you to confirm in writing within 14 days (of receiving written notification of the change) if you would like to be considered for the alternative(s):

- If you do not contact the University within 14 days to confirm that you would like to be considered for an alternative course, your application will be withdrawn and you will be contacted by the University to confirm that this has taken place.
- If the University does not have any suitable alternative courses available, the institution will use its reasonable endeavours to suggest a suitable alternative course with an alternative provider and will provide you with a full refund of any deposit or tuition fees paid.

Course Changes

85. The University reserves the right to make course changes, including changes to course content, structure, teaching and assessment, at any time between your acceptance to 28 days prior to the date when your course starts, for one or more of the following reasons:

- To comply with external, professional, accrediting or other regulatory body requirements.
- To improve course quality.
- To ensure that the curriculum is relevant to the intended learning outcomes and/or standards set by relevant professional bodies.
- To implement external examiner and academic adviser feedback.
- To implement student feedback, for the benefit of students.

86. The University will notify you of any such changes as soon as reasonably practicable. If, as a result of a change made under this clause, you wish to withdraw your acceptance or terminate your enrolment:

- You must notify the University in writing or through UCAS, within 14 days of receiving written notification of the change;
- If you would like to be considered for another course, the University will use its reasonable endeavours to provide a suitable alternative course within the institution (for which tuition fees may be payable) or suggest a suitable alternative course with an alternative provider;
- The University will provide you with a full refund of any deposit or tuition fee paid.

Late Course Changes

87. The University reserves the right to make course changes, including changes to course content, structure, teaching and assessment, at any time later than the 28 day period specified in paragraph 85, including after your enrolment and/or your course start date, for the reasons set out in paragraph 85.

88. If the University makes any changes to your course, you will be notified of such changes as soon as reasonably practicable.

89. If you do not agree that the change of which you have been notified after your enrolment is fair, you may wish to seek redress under the [University of Suffolk Student Complaints Procedure](#).

90. If, as a result of a change made under this clause, you wish to withdraw your acceptance or terminate your enrolment:

- You must notify the University in writing or through UCAS, within 14 days of receiving written notification of the change;
- If you would like to be considered for another course, the University will use its reasonable endeavours to provide a suitable alternative course within the institution (for which tuition fees may be payable) or suggest a suitable alternative course with an alternative provider;
- The University will provide you with a full refund of any deposit or tuition fee paid.

91. Any change made to your course under this clause which falls outwith the reasons set out in paragraph 85 would be considered by the University to be a variation of your contract with the institution, to which your consent is required. In these circumstances you will be asked to contact the University in writing, normally within 14 days, if you are not willing to consent to the changes. Student representatives will be consulted in advance about course changes made under this clause.

92. If you do not give consent to a change made within the circumstances set out in section 85, the following will apply:

- Upon receiving your written concerns, the University will invite you to meet relevant University staff to discuss the issue with the aim of seeking a mutually acceptable resolution.
- If no resolution is reached, you will have the right to withdraw from your course.

93. If you decide to withdraw from your course in these circumstances:

- You must notify the University in writing, within 14 days of receiving written notification of the change;
- If you so request, the institution will use its reasonable endeavours to provide a suitable alternative course at the University (for which tuition fees may be payable) or suggest a suitable alternative course at another provider;

- The University will provide you with a full refund of any deposit or tuition fee paid towards the course from which you are withdrawing. The University will also consider, on a case by case basis, evidence of direct losses incurred by students withdrawing from a course as a result of late changes.

Course Suspension

94. The University reserves the right to suspend a course before it has started, for the following reasons:

- Due to an insufficient number or quality of student applications received, the University is unable to guarantee the student experience and/or is unable to meet course number requirements.
- Accreditation/support from relevant professional or regulatory bodies is withdrawn.
- The course is not financially viable.

95. In order to minimise disruption caused by course suspensions, the University will:

- Use its best endeavours to recruit sufficient numbers of students in order to run the course.
- Warn you if a course is at risk of suspension due to failure to achieve sufficient numbers and quality of student applications.
- Give you no less than 28 days' notice of suspension prior to the start of the course.
- If, due to circumstances beyond the institution's reasonable control, it is not possible to notify you in advance, the University will endeavour to do so as soon as reasonably practicable.

96. If the University has to suspend your course after you have accepted an offer the institution will:

- use reasonable endeavours to provide a suitable alternative course at the University (for which tuition fees will be payable) or suggest a suitable alternative course at another provider;
- provide you with a full refund of any deposit or tuition fee paid towards the course which has been suspended.

Feedback to Applicants

97. If an applicant requires feedback on an unsuccessful application, this should be in writing to the Admissions Office. This request will then be passed to the appropriate Admissions Selector. The University will not discuss the outcome of individual applications with anyone other than the applicant.

Complaints

98. Concerns that the University's admissions principles and procedures have been incorrectly implemented may be raised through the [University of Suffolk Applicant Appeals and Complaints Procedure](#). The University does not normally offer applicants the right to appeal an academic decision not to offer a place on a University of Suffolk degree, unless additional information is provided to support the original application.

99. Applicants are encouraged to view the [Tuition Fee Policy](#) and the [General Regulations \(Students\)](#), which sets out the requirements of students relating to Attendance and Conduct.

Use of Applicant Data

100. The University of Suffolk needs to collect, maintain and use personal data in order to process applications for study, to enrol students, to administer courses, and provide relevant facilities. Data collected during the admissions process is used for the purposes of creating applicant records (and subsequently student records if an individual enrolls) and to process the applications in accordance with relevant policies and procedures. The University may need to collect and process sensitive personal data such as ethnic origin, disability data and sometimes other personal data in order to provide access to some courses and additional support where appropriate. We are also legally required to collect and process data on current and past criminal convictions. This data will only be shared between staff who have a legitimate need to see it.

101. Data is processed in accordance with data protection legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and the University of Suffolk Data Protection Policy.

102. We might use a third party for some specific scenarios <https://www.uos.ac.uk/about/our-university/governance/data-governance/>

Questions about this policy

103. Any questions about the University of Suffolk Admissions Policy should be directed to the Admissions Office:

University of Suffolk
Admissions Office
Waterfront Building
Neptune Quay
Ipswich
IP4 1QJ
admissions@uos.ac.uk

104. Any questions about the admission of Postgraduate Research students should be directed to the Graduate School at graduateschool@uos.ac.uk

Appendix 1

Additional admissions arrangements for applicants who will be under the age of 18 on commencement of studies

1.1. Where an applicant will be under the age of 18 at the start of their chosen course, the University will require the applicant's parent/guardian to sign the University's Consent Form and return it to the Admissions Office as confirmation that they, the parent/guardian, have read and understood the nature of the obligations which the University owes to its students under the age of 18 and the extent of the services and facilities available to them. No applicant under the age of 18 will be admitted by the University unless and until the Consent Form has been signed and returned to the Admissions Office.

1.2. Where the parents/guardians of an applicant under the age of 18 are not resident in the UK, the University requires that a UK-based guardian is appointed and the guardian's details are provided in writing to the University as a condition of admission.

1.3. Under the guidance produced by the Home Office, applicants can apply for a UKVI Student Visa to study in the UK if they are 16 years old or older. This would mean that if an international applicant is 15 years or younger when studying, the University would be unable to support their application to study.

1.4. The University must comply with regulations set by the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). As such, parents/guardians must ensure that suitable care arrangements are in place for a child under the age of 18 who will study in the UK and be sponsored by the University under its Student Visa licence. The Consent Form requires parents/guardians to confirm:

- their relationship to the applicant
- that they consent to the application as a UKVI Student Visa student
- that they consent to the applicant's living arrangements in the UK
- that they consent to the applicant's independent travel to the UK
- the arrangements for the applicant's travel, reception to the UK and living arrangements.

1.5. A student aged 16 or 17 has the legal right to live independently in the UK and may make their own accommodation arrangements. However, when a 16 or 17 year old applies for a visa under the UKVI Student Visa route, they must have their parents' or a legal guardian's permission both to travel to the UK and live independently.

1.6. If one parent or legal guardian has legal custody of or sole responsibility for the applicant, this must be confirmed on the Consent Form and the form signed by that parent or legal guardian.

If not, then both parents or legal guardians must give their consent and the form must be signed by both of them.

1.7. Minors over 16 years of age have the same rights under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as those over 18. This means that the University will not disclose any information about such applicants and/or students without their specific consent. However, if the applicant/student fails to pay any sums agreed on contract then it might be necessary to disclose this to any guarantor and possibly to a debt collection agency.

Appendix 2

Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions Procedure

2.1. The purpose of the procedure set out in this appendix is to ensure that applicants who have relevant criminal convictions to declare are treated consistently and equitably and in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. The procedure follows the SPA (Supporting Professionalism in Admissions) Criminal Convictions: Statement of Good Practice and seeks not to replace the role and responsibilities of the Criminal Justice Service to determine an individuals' suitability within the wider society.

2.2. Applicants who declare a conviction(s) in accordance with the policy will not be automatically excluded from the application process. Applicants must demonstrate that they meet both the academic requirements and the suitability requirements for a programme of study. This may involve a separate risk assessment of the applicant's ability to fulfil both requirements.

2.3. The relevance of any declared criminal convictions made by applicants will depend upon the nature of the course to which entry is sought. The University of Suffolk will consider any course and module content and professional placement requirements when determining if there is a specific need for an assessment of an applicant's criminal convictions declaration.

2.4. Applicants seeking advice on whether their convictions are spent or relevant are advised to contact Unlock (www.unlock.org.uk), who can provide specific advice in relation to HE applications and criminal convictions.

Professional courses which require undertaking regulated activity

2.5. Regulated activity refers to certain roles, professions and programmes of study subject to working with children or adults at risk. This would include but would not be exclusive to programmes in health, social work and teaching where such roles are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All applicants applying for professional courses that require undertaking regulated activity must declare all relevant criminal convictions prior to admission as part of the interview response online process via a confidential self-disclosure form. The content of any criminal conviction disclosure will be viewed only by trained Admissions staff and Safeguarding Leads if, as a result of interview, the University is considering making the applicant an offer.

2.6. Applicants are informed via the Prospectus, UCAS, the University of Suffolk website and other programme related information if they are required to declare any criminal convictions,

including spent convictions and cautions (including verbal cautions) and bind-over orders that will not be filtered under Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) guidelines in addition to any relevant unspent convictions. This includes reference to any fees incurred by the applicant for the cost of a DBS certificate and if required, annual subscription to the Online Update Service.

2.7. In accordance with the professional standards and code of practice required for each course, the University will also assess the suitability of applicants in relation to their conduct, health, and character in their ability to practise safely, respectfully and with personal integrity. For some courses, this may require further disclosure of whether the applicant is both indirectly or directly subject to any safeguarding investigations or inquiries that relate to safeguarding children or adults at risk. This includes immediate family members (including children of) and/or person(s) with who they have an intimate relationship. Details of the disclosure will be further anonymised and shared with members of the Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions Panel.

2.8. Applicants in roles requiring regulated activity must complete an enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service Certificate (DBS) alongside any self-declaration documentation as part of the annual online enrolment process as detailed in the University of Suffolk Fitness to Practise Procedures. Any applicants that are barred from regulated activity (subject to the Disclosure and Barring Service Barred List) should be aware that it is an offence to apply for a programme of study where regulated activity is a course requirement.

2.9. The University may amend or withdraw the offer of a place or terminate enrolment at any time if it determines that an applicant has made any misleading, false or fraudulent application or statement to the institution, or has produced falsified documents, regarding any relevant criminal convictions, whether as part of their application or whilst on their course. Where the student is already enrolled on a professional course, it may also be necessary for the matter to be referred to the relevant PSRB.

Professional courses with module options/ pathways which require undertaking regulated activity

2.10. Disclosures of criminal convictions and a DBS Certificate may be required and further risk assessed for courses where a professional placement and/or module requires regulated activity as a potential pathway on the applicant's chosen programme of study, including where an applicant is subject to any license condition or monitoring restrictions that could affect their ability to successfully complete a module or programme of study.

2.11. Where an applicant is prohibited from taking an optional module or placement, they will be required to select from the other options available to ensure that a programme of study can be

successfully completed. If a placement/module in regulated activity is mandatory, the applicant may be withdrawn from the course or transferred to an alternative course that does not require regulated activity.

Disclosure and Barring Service Procedures

2.12. If an applicant is successful in receiving an offer for a place on a course, the Admissions Office will make clear to the applicant any non-academic conditions attached to their offer. This will include a satisfactory DBS check for all professional courses as outlined as above. The DBS Team at Ipswich (via a 3rd party service) and staff at the relevant partner college are responsible for administering this process.

2.13. By completing the DBS application process, the applicant is consenting that the original disclosure will be provided to the DBS Team/partner college. All DBS documentation should be received by the point of induction at the University.

2.14. Upon receipt of the DBS disclosure, the Admissions Manager and Head of Safeguarding and DBS shall review the disclosure and highlight to the Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions Panel where new or different information is revealed on the DBS disclosure and review the original decision to determine the suitability of the applicant to commence the course.

2.15. The University may seek the applicant's consent to contact and/or refer to external agencies such as the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Police, Probation Services or other appropriate independent person/body to request further advice and information regarding the applicant. Any personal data provided by individuals and authorities will be treated in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations and Data Protection Act (2018).

2.16. To be valid, a DBS disclosure must be less than three months old at the time of application or commencing a placement to a programme of study that requires regulated activity with children and/or adults at risk.

2.17. Existing DBS certificates an applicant may have completed through previous employment or volunteering will not be accepted unless the applicant can demonstrate that it meets the requirements of the course and can provide the original certificate for review. If a DBS certificate is subscribed to the DBS Annual Online Update Service, the applicant should provide permission for the University to complete a 'Status check' on the applicant's current status to enable the DBS certificate to be valid for placement and/or the course.

2.18. For a number of professional courses, students will be required to pay and subscribe to the Annual Online DBS Update Service as a requirement of their course. Failure to comply with this may result:

- in a breach of policy and/or;
- delay in placement start date
- withdrawal from placement
- a new DBS application required to be completed and subscribed to the Update Service. Any costs incurred will be at the student's own expense.
- disciplinary action.

2.19. If an applicant is already employed in a post which gives direct access to children and vulnerable adults and is being supported in undertaking the course by their employer, such as through an apprenticeship programme, the University of Suffolk requires notification of the issue date and certificate number of the certificate via the Employer Suitability Declaration. In these circumstances the employer must show due diligence for the learner as their employee to ensure that all suitability checks (including the accuracy and completion of a DBS certificate) are completed in line with safer recruitment standards.

Other courses not requiring regulated activity

2.20. Applicants to programmes of study that do not require regulated activity as a mandatory course requirement and are likely to not lead directly to an exempt profession will only be required to disclose their criminal record if they are currently subject to any license condition or monitoring restriction that could affect their ability to successfully complete their studies.

2.21. Any declared conditions or monitoring restrictions will be carefully risk assessed as to not hinder an applicant's ability to progress on a programme of study. This is providing that the restrictions imposed do not prevent a student being able to successfully complete their chosen programme of study i.e. any restrictions placed on computer use or internet access would prevent a student from completing and submitting required work.

'Late'/Clearing applicants with criminal convictions

2.22. All applications made either directly to the University of Suffolk or through UCAS are checked by trained Admissions staff and Safeguarding Leads for disclosure of a criminal conviction prior to any offer being made. No firm commitment will be made to any applicant until the disclosure is fully investigated.

EU and international applicants

2.23. EU and international applicants to courses requiring a DBS check will be expected to undergo a criminal records check in their home country and supply the University with a Certificate of Good Conduct or equivalent. The University of Suffolk will also seek a DBS check for any time spent in the UK and will also run a formal DBS check soon after commencement of the course. If formal police or criminal records checks cannot be obtained, the University will seek advice from the relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) where applicable.

Process for applicants disclosing criminal convictions and suitability

2.24. Where an applicant indicates on their application/self-disclosure form that they have a relevant criminal conviction, the application will first be considered by the person responsible for making a decision on the application according to the normal stated entrance requirements i.e. that the candidate fulfils the academic entry requirements. If the application is unsuccessful, no further action is taken in connection with the criminal conviction issue and the decision is processed in the usual way and all records destroyed.

2.25. If the applicant confirms that the 'criminal convictions' question had been ticked in error and the applicant does not, in fact, have a relevant conviction, the Admissions Officer will seek the applicant's assurance of this in writing/by email and make the appropriate note on the Student Records System. The applicant will also be advised to contact UCAS.

2.26. Where the applicant meets the academic requirements for their chosen programme, the Admissions Officer will contact the applicant to complete a Self-Disclosure Criminal Convictions Declaration form. The matter will be referred to the Admissions Manager and the Head of Safeguarding and DBS to follow the procedure for consideration of disclosed criminal conviction. An offer will not be processed until the outcome of this procedure.

2.27. If an applicant receives a relevant criminal conviction after applying to the University but prior to enrolling as a student, they should contact the Admissions Officer and the Head of Safeguarding and DBS to notify them of their change of status.

2.28. Applicants will be given ten working days to provide documentation concerning their conviction. If the request for further information is within Clearing or prior to a February/Spring intake, five working days will be given to provide the documentation. This is due to the tight timescales during these periods.

2.29. Failure on the part of an applicant to provide the documentation within the specified period will result in a rejection of their application. For undergraduate applications, the reject decision will be through UCAS.

2.30. The University of Suffolk reserves the right to offer deferred entry to applicants where appropriate adjustments can be made to support study, but where there is not sufficient time to put in place agreed adjustments for the next programme intake.

Failure to disclose a criminal conviction or suitability concern

2.31. In the event that an applicant fails to declare information as required, the University of Suffolk reserves the right to withdraw an offer or terminate the place, as appropriate. If a student has already registered on a programme of study this will be dealt with under the terms outlined in Fitness to Practise and Student Discipline Procedures.

Role of the Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions Panel

2.32. The function of the Panel is to take a reasonable view to assess the level of risk the applicant may pose to the University of Suffolk, its members and visitors or any relevant external stakeholders (such as placement providers). The Panel may also consider if the information presented has potential to affect the applicant's ability to register with a professional body on completion of a programme of study.

2.33. The applicant will be notified that a Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions Panel will be convened to consider their non-academic suitability for a place on the course. The applicant will also be sent a copy of this policy.

2.34. The Admissions Manager will be responsible for making the arrangements for the Panel, who will receive the original application/self-disclosure, initial risk assessment of the disclosure plus additional information provided by the applicant.

2.35. The Panel shall comprise the relevant Dean of School or nominee (or equivalent post-holder at the appropriate partner or nominee such as Deputy Academic Registrar), the Admissions Manager and a Safeguarding Officer. For courses where a placement is an integral part of the course, the views of the placement provider or a body representing the views of a group of placement providers will also be sought, as may the views of any relevant professional or assessment body including the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

2.36. The Panel will meet virtually or in person as soon as practically possible after the information is received from the applicant. At any stage, the Panel may determine that further information is required, and/or an interview held with the applicant to support the decision-making process.

2.37. The Panel will consider all the evidence available to assess the applicant's non-academic suitability for a place on the course, and undertake a risk assessment taking into account:

- the relevance of the offence(s) and/or disclosure to the course of study;
- the seriousness of the offence (s) and/or disclosure;
- the length of time since the offence(s) and/or disclosure;
- whether there is an established pattern, history of concerns;
- whether the applicant's situation has changed since the offence(s) was/were committed;
- the circumstances surrounding the offence(s) and/or disclosure;
- the applicant's explanation for the offence(s); and
- the requirements of the various Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and requirements of the law to protect special categories' of people (children and vulnerable adults);
- evidence submitted of their good character, conduct and/ or any mitigating factors relating to broader safeguarding concerns that may affect ability to practice safely, respectfully and with personal integrity (e.g. engagement with statutory services).

2.38. If during the considerations of the Panel a situation should arise where there is the need to inform local safeguarding procedures either by referral to Adult Safeguarding or the Local Authority Designated Officer this should take place immediately and the Panel will be suspended until the further information is provided by the appropriate external agency.

2.39. The Panel in making a final judgment should reach one of the conclusions:

- **Low Risk**
The level of risk has been determined as low or acceptable. The conviction bears no weight on the requirements of the course. The offer can be processed as normal and enrolment on course to continue.
- **Low-Medium Risk**
The level of risk is medium and further conditions to study should be applied. The applicant may be given a new offer to study on a different course or with different module selections and conditions attached. The applicant may be offered a deferred start date to gather further information to conclude any decision making. The applicant will have opportunity to decide whether they wish to continue with enrolment or on the course.
- **High Risk**
The level of risk is high and considered at a risk to high continue with offer or course of study. The University is unable to adequately safeguard the needs of students, staff, visitors and external parties. Subsequently the decision will be made not to make an offer,

to withdraw an offer or to make a recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor or relevant Principal that the student's enrolment be terminated (where appropriate).

2.40. The Panel shall make a formal record of the reasons for their decision to be retained by the Admissions Office.

2.41. The Admissions Officer shall advise the applicant of the Panel's decision as soon as possible, and no longer than five working days after the decision is made. If the Panel has decided not to make a formal offer of a place, to suggest an alternative course, or to set conditions, the applicant shall also be informed by the Admissions Officer of the Appeals Process (see below).

Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Conviction Appeals Process

2.42. An applicant may appeal against a decision of the Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions Panel on one or more of the following grounds:

- procedural irregularity, where it is alleged that the University did not adhere to its procedures;
- prejudice or bias, where it is alleged that members of the Panel involved in making the decision acted unfairly towards the applicant;
- extenuating circumstances, where there are facts which might lessen or reduce the seriousness of the criminal record which were not known to the Panel at the time it made its decision and which could not reasonably have been made known at that time.

Submitting a Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions Appeal

2.43. If an applicant wishes to appeal against a decision of the Panel, they must submit the Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions Appeal Form to the Admissions Office within ten working days of receipt of the Panel's decision. The Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions Appeal Form is available on MySuffolk and the University of Suffolk website. Support is available to applicants from the Student Life team.

Consideration of Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Conviction Appeals

2.44. The receipt of the appeal will be acknowledged by the Admissions Office and an initial assessment will be undertaken by the Director of Student Life/Academic Registrar or nominee to check that the appeal meets at least one of the grounds in paragraph 2.42 and that the form is fully completed and submitted within the required timeframe.

2.45. The applicant (the appellant) should ensure they submit all appropriate evidence to support the stated grounds for their appeal. The Director of Student Life/Academic Registrar or nominee has the right to request further clarification and/or additional written evidence from the appellant and/or staff.

2.46. Where additional evidence and/or clarification is requested from the appellant, this should be submitted to the Admissions Office by the given deadline. Should it not be received by this date, the appeal will be assessed on the evidence provided with the original submission.

2.47. As part of the initial assessment, the Director of Student Life/Academic Registrar or nominee shall ask the appropriate Admissions Officer for the decision of the original Panel and the evidence and reasons on which the decision was based.

2.48. Following the initial assessment, the Director of Student Life/Academic Registrar or nominee will determine whether the appeal should be reconsidered by the original Panel, be rejected or be considered further by an Appeals Panel.

Reconsideration by the Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions Panel

2.49. If the Director of Student Life/Academic Registrar or nominee determines that the case should be reconsidered by the Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions Panel, for example if new information has been provided, a Panel will be convened in accordance with paragraph 2.35.

2.50. The Panel will inform the Director of Student Life/Academic Registrar or nominee of the outcome of their reconsideration.

2.51. If the Panel has revised its original decision, the Director of Student Life/Academic Registrar or nominee, via the Admissions Office, will inform the appellant of this decision in writing, normally no longer than five working days after the Panel has met.

2.52. If there is no change to the original decision, the Director of Student Life/Academic Registrar or nominee will consult with a senior representative of the awarding institution to

determine whether the appeal should be rejected or warrants further consideration by an appeals panel.

Rejection of Criminal Conviction Appeal

2.53. If the Director of Student Life/Academic Registrar or nominee determines that the appeal should be rejected, the matter shall be referred to a senior representative of the awarding institution for consideration. If the senior representative agrees that the appeal should be rejected, the Director of Student Life/Academic Registrar or nominee, via the Admissions Office, shall inform the appellant of the decision in writing, normally within ten working days of receipt of their appeal.

2.54. This decision is final and there is no further right of appeal within the University of Suffolk.

Consideration by the Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions Appeals Panel

2.55. If the Director of Student Life/Academic Registrar or nominee, in consultation with a senior representative of the awarding institution, decides that the appeal warrants further consideration, they will appoint an Appeals Panel.

2.56. Membership will be of mixed gender where possible and shall comprise:

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor or nominee (Chair)
- One academic who has had no previous involvement in the case (and, for professional courses, is a registrant of the relevant PSRB)
- One academic from the relevant subject area from the awarding institution
- One representative from a relevant placement provider (for professional courses only).

2.57. A representative from the Admissions Office will be appointed as Secretary to the Appeals Panel and record the Panel's decision and justification for that decision.

2.58. The Appeals Panel shall carry out a review of all documents considered by the Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions Panel, together with the written statement submitted by the applicant setting out the grounds for the appeal. The Appeals Panel shall not proceed by way of a hearing but shall have the power to require the presentation of such further evidence as it deems necessary. The applicant will be informed of when the Appeals Panel will meet but will not be present.

2.59. The Appeals Panel shall have the same powers as the Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions Panel and may confirm the decision of the Safeguarding, Suitability and Criminal Convictions Panel or substitute such other decision as it considers appropriate.

2.60. When the Appeals Panel has reached its decision, the Secretary shall inform the applicant in writing through the issue of a completion of procedures letter, copied to the Dean of School (or equivalent) and Academic Registrar, within five days of the Appeals Panel meeting.

2.61. The decision of the Appeals Panel is final and there is no further right to appeal.

Reference Requests

2.62. The University will conduct all reference requests for all professional courses in accordance with Safer Recruitment procedures as to ensure greater scrutiny of accuracy and validity. Professional references must be obtained via a professional email account and/or on headed paper, references from personal accounts or the applicant's personal email accounts will not be accepted.

Additional Information

2.63. If a student withdraws from the University with an uninvestigated criminal conviction or suitability concern, the conviction/concern will be investigated if they later apply to return to study. At times, it may be necessary for information to be further referred to external agencies such as the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Police or Disclosure and Barring Service.

Data Protection and Retention

2.64. In a limited number of cases, after careful consideration, the University may decide that there are departments, services or individuals within the institution who have an important interest in this information on a need to know basis, possibly to offer support to the applicant/student or to protect other members of the University community. The Director of Student Life/Academic Registrar (as the University of Suffolk Data Protection Officer) will decide what information can be disclosed and to whom. The applicant will be notified when this is the case.

2.65. Where possible, details that could identify the applicant, such as name, will be excluded unless it is necessary to know the identity of the applicant in order to make the admissions decision.

2.66. Where an applicant with a conviction is granted admission to the University, details of the non-academic considerations relating to the admission will be kept securely by OSACC for as long as the student in question is registered with the University plus one year. After this point a record of the decision taken will be maintained but all other supporting documentation will be removed. Where an applicant is not granted admission to the University, the decision and all supporting documentation will be saved centrally by the Admissions Office.