Special Cases Policy for Admission to Postgraduate Taught and Research Programmes of Study

1. Applicants who hold a degree which is below a UK Lower Second Class Honours level.

1.1. A special case will only be valid for someone who has appropriate and relevant work experience to compensate for the degree(s) being below the College’s minimum requirement. The department will decide what appropriate and relevant work experience is.

1.2. Special cases will be overseen by the relevant Faculty Education Committee (FEC) or Postgraduate Research Quality Committee (PRQC).

**Process**

1.3. If the Department wishes to offer a place to such an applicant, the Programme Director/supervisor (or equivalent) will make a case to the Director of Postgraduate Studies (or department equivalent) for consideration. Once a decision has been made it will be conveyed to the Programme Director/supervisor (or equivalent) and department administrator, who will submit the decision to Admissions who will inform the applicant.

2. Special Qualifying Examination (SQE) for Admission to Master’s level Programmes only

2.1. An SQE will be required for Master’s level taught programmes (including MRes) where an applicant is not a graduate but has a professional qualification(s) which falls below the College’s minimum entry requirement; or where an applicant is a graduate from an institution where the College has no previous experience or knowledge following an assessment by Admissions. Applicants should have relevant work experience post award of qualification.

2.2. A special qualifying examination should be taken to determine that the applicant’s academic ability is of an appropriate level for Master’s level study.

**Process**

2.3. For Master’s level programmes where a Special Qualifying Examination entry route has been approved, applicants follow the normal application process and in the first instance their application will be assessed by Admissions and then forwarded to the department for consideration. If after consideration the Programme Director (or equivalent) decides that the applicant should be invited to take an SQE, a case will be submitted to the Director of Postgraduate Studies (or department equivalent).

2.4. If the Director of Postgraduate Studies supports the case, the Programme Director is informed and makes the necessary arrangements for the applicant
to sit the SQE. The SQE is marked by the department and is sent to the external examiner(s). The external examiner(s) will then advise whether an offer should be made on the basis of the SQE result. The result of the SQE and recommendation of the external examiner(s) is sent by the Department to Admissions. If an offer of admission is made this will be done following the normal offer procedure.

2.5. The Faculty Education Committees (FEC)s are responsible for approving whether a programme can set SQEs or not. The Faculty Education Committees are also responsible for overseeing annually the numbers of applicants being set SQEs and their outcomes for onward reporting to QAEC.

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