

# TAFE NSW HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENT SELECTION AND ADMISSION PROCEDURE

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## 1. Document history and details

Version 13: 1 June 2023

Commencement date: Semester 2 2023

## 2. Introduction

2.1 This procedure outlines the principles of admission and selection into TAFE NSW Higher Education courses and the responsibilities of staff involved in student admission and selection.

2.2 TAFE NSW Higher Education is committed to:

- a broad and flexible framework for student admission into TAFE NSW Higher Education courses.
- an efficient and equitable student admissions process for applicants which includes suitable adjustment for applicants who have been disadvantaged in educational experience but who demonstrate potential to succeed.
- reliability and transparency.
- a commitment to maximising student success in academic study; and
- compliance with TEQSA Threshold Standards on admission and course entry.

2.3 Decisions related to academic entry requirements will be made by appropriately qualified academic staff.

## 3. Audience and applicability

3.1 This procedure applies to:

- TAFE NSW Higher Education courses of study.
- staff involved with admitting students to TAFE NSW Higher Education courses of study; and
- applicants for entry into TAFE NSW Higher Education courses of study.

## 4. Definitions

Term	Definition
<b>Academic staff</b>	Dean of Higher Education, Course Coordinators, Teachers
<b>AQF qualification</b>	An AQF (Australian Qualifications Framework) qualification is a complete accredited program of study leading to formal certification.
<b>Course Advisory Committee</b>	Established for each course, and responsible for providing advice on course entry requirements and selection criteria. Comprises external academics and industry representatives.
<b>Course Coordinator</b>	The academic manager of a TAFE NSW Higher Education course, who has overall responsibility for course and student management at the delivering campus.
<b>Dean of Higher Education</b>	Responsible for overseeing and reporting to the Higher Education Academic Council on a range of TAFE NSW Higher Education academic matters, student management, course implementation and professional development of staff.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Higher Education Academic Council</b>	Responsible for academic governance of TAFE NSW Higher Education to allow educational objectives to be achieved.
<b>IELTS</b>	International English Language Testing System – the standard English language testing system used to determine English language proficiency in relation to international student admission.
<b>Senior Manager, Higher Education Quality</b>	Overall responsibility for TAFE NSW Higher Education programs and point of contact between TAFE NSW and TEQSA.
<b>TAFE NSW Higher Education</b>	TAFE NSW Higher Education is the registered trading name of the Technical and Further Education Commission as a higher education provider.
<b>Teaching and Learning Committee</b>	The Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) monitors the implementation of a TAFE NSW Higher Education course to ensure quality and consistency of teaching and learning across all delivery locations. The TLC also has responsibility for endorsing and monitoring any proposed course improvements.
<b>TEQSA</b>	Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency. The national regulator of higher education in Australia.

## **5. Entry requirements**

- 5.1 Entry requirements are the minimum qualifications, knowledge, skills and/or experience that an applicant must have to be considered for entry into a TAFE NSW Higher Education course of study.
- 5.2 Entry requirements comprise minimum TAFE NSW Higher Education entry requirements (refer Section 6) as well as any additional course specific entry requirements (refer Section 7).
- 5.3 An eligible applicant is one who has met the minimum TAFE NSW Higher Education entry requirements as well as any additional course specific entry requirements.
- 5.4 Entry requirements for a course of study are advertised on the TAFE NSW website, and in course specific information materials.
- 5.5 Transparent entry requirements, both academic and non-academic, shall be used to underpin judgements that are made during the selection process for entry.

## **6. Minimum entry requirements**

- 6.1 Applicants are required to hold, or be currently completing, one of the following to be considered eligible for entry to a TAFE NSW Higher Education undergraduate course of study:
- NSW HSC (Higher School Certificate), or completion of Year 12, or equivalent; or
  - A recognised Tertiary Preparation Certificate; or
  - A qualification from a Registered Training Organisation at Certificate IV level or above; or
  - successful completion of at least one year full-time or equivalent study at a university or accredited higher education institution.
- 6.2 Applicants who do not satisfy any of the above four minimum entry requirements may seek entry into an undergraduate course under special admissions provisions as described under Section 8.

6.3 Applicants seeking entry into TAFE NSW Higher Education post-graduate courses of study must meet the admission requirements specified for that course.

## **7. Course specific entry requirements**

7.1 A course of study may set its own specific entry requirements in addition to the minimum entry requirements.

7.2 Course specific entry requirements are additional entry requirements designed to ensure students have adequate prior knowledge and skills to undertake the course of study successfully. Course specific entry requirements may include, but are not limited to:

- completion of an identified course (for example, as an entry requirement into post-graduate qualifications).
- submission of a portfolio of evidence.
- submission of a written piece of work.
- English language and/or numeracy requirements to ensure students will be able to participate effectively in the course of study.

7.3 The scope of course specific entry requirements will have been:

- recommended by the Course Advisory Committee; and
- endorsed by the Higher Education Academic Council; and
- approved by the course accreditation authority (TEQSA) at the time the course was accredited.

7.4 The detailed content of the course specific entry requirements will be developed by the Course Coordinator together with relevant academic staff with recommendations from the Teaching and Learning Committee.

7.5 The detailed content of the course specific entry requirements will be available to applicants.

7.6 The Course Coordinator will make a decision for admission based on the evidence provided.

## **8. Special admissions**

Applicants who do not satisfy any of the above entry requirements may seek entry into a course under special admissions provisions.

8.1 Disadvantage

8.1.1 An applicant who does not meet any of the above entry criteria as described under Sections 6 and 7 above, may apply for entry based on reasons of disadvantage.

8.1.2 Disadvantage includes but is not limited to:

- disability.
- serious or chronic illness.
- interrupted education.
- lack of support for study.
- serious personal problems; and/or
- serious family responsibilities.

8.1.3 An applicant seeking entry into a TAFE NSW Higher Education course on the basis of disadvantage should speak to the Course Coordinator prior to submitting their

application for entry to determine what supporting documentation is required to support the application for admission based on disadvantage.

- portfolio of evidence that will demonstrate a reasonable likelihood of success in the course of study; and/or
- an interview; and/or
- supporting evidence in the way of documentary proof of disadvantage, such as medical or relevant certificate, statutory declaration.

8.1.4 The Course Coordinator will make a decision for admission based on the evidence provided.

8.1.5 In cases where there is lack of evidence to demonstrate the likelihood of success, the Course Coordinator may make a recommendation to undertake a tertiary preparation course prior to being accepted into the TAFE NSW Higher Education course.

## 8.2 Mature age

8.2.1 An applicant who does not meet any of the above entry criteria as described under Sections 6 and 7 above, may apply for entry on the basis of mature age.

8.2.2 To qualify for mature age entry, the applicant must be at least 21 in their first year of study.

8.2.3 An applicant seeking entry into a TAFE NSW Higher Education course on the basis of mature age should speak to the Course Coordinator prior to submitting their application for entry to determine what supporting documentation is required to support the application for admission based on mature age which could include:

- portfolio of evidence that will demonstrate a reasonable likelihood of success in the course of study; and/or
- an interview.

8.2.4 The Course Coordinator will make a decision for admission based on the evidence provided.

8.2.5 In cases where there is lack of evidence to demonstrate the likelihood of success, the Course Coordinator may make a recommendation to undertake a tertiary preparation course prior to being accepted into the TAFE NSW Higher Education course.

## 8.3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

8.3.1 TAFE NSW encourages and supports applications to study from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

8.3.2 An applicant seeking entry into a TAFE NSW Higher Education course who is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person should speak to the Course Coordinator prior to submitting their application for entry to determine what supporting documentation is required to support the application for admission.

8.3.3 The Course Coordinator will make a decision for admission based on the evidence provided.

8.3.4 In cases where there is lack of evidence to demonstrate the likelihood of success, the Course Coordinator may make a recommendation to undertake a tertiary preparation course prior to being accepted into the TAFE NSW Higher Education course.

## 9. International applicants

The following admission requirements apply to international applicants who:

- intend to study onshore under the provisions of an international student visa; or
- intend to study offshore and who are seeking to enrol into courses which are delivered fully online.

### 9.1 Minimum English proficiency requirements

9.1.1 In addition to proof of eligibility and course specific entry requirements, international applicants must demonstrate English proficiency in accordance with one of the following:

- a) a minimum overall IELTS level of 6.5 (or equivalent), with a minimum level of 6 in all bands; or
- b) Occupational English Test (OET) with a minimum score of B in each of the 4 components; or
- c) Pearson Tests of English (PTE) Academic with an overall score of 58 and minimum score of 50 in each component; or
- d) TOEFL (iBT) with the following minimum scores: Overall 79; Reading 19; Listening 20; Speaking 20; and Writing 20; or
- e) TAFE NSW English Language Program (with Academic English).

9.1.2 International applicants who fall into any of the following categories are exempt from providing evidence of the English language proficiency requirements outlined in Section 9.1.1.

- Completion of Year 12 or equivalent or higher-level studies in one or more of the following countries: UK, USA, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, or the Republic of Ireland.
- Completion of NSW HSC or equivalent or studies at Certificate IV level or higher in Australia.

9.1.3 Some TAFE NSW Higher Education courses may specify minimum English language proficiency requirements other than those specified under 9.1.1.

### 9.2 Course Specific Entry Requirements

9.2.1 Where a course of study has specific entry requirements in addition to the minimum entry requirements as described under Section 7 above, international applicants must provide evidence to satisfy the Course Coordinator in relation to the additional course specific entry requirements.

9.2.2 Where course specific entry requirements require the submission of an essay, the Course Coordinator will accept essays that address a previous year's essay question, in order to accommodate the time-lag in the application process for international applicants.

9.2.3 Where an international applicant fails to correctly address the course specific entry requirements, they will not be considered eligible for entry until they address the correct course entry requirements.

9.2.4 Where interviews are a requirement for entry and/or selection into a course, international applicants will be expected to undertake an interview, facilitated in the following ways:

- 9.2.4.1 Onshore applicants: Onshore international applicants will be interviewed at the campus of delivery in line with arrangements for domestic applicants.

- 9.2.4.2 Offshore Applicants: Where possible, and to ensure the integrity of the interview, arrangements will be made with international students' agents or Austrade offices to assist in the conduct of the interview. Identification checks will be made at these offices and arrangements to use telephone facilities will be managed by TAFE NSW International and relevant assessing staff.
- 9.2.4.3 Extenuating circumstances: Where applicants are remote from agents or Austrade offices, a request with the applicant for a videoconference interview (e.g. Skype, Zoom) will be made. Identity checks will be arranged using these facilities. Where no videoconference facilities exist and in exceptional circumstances, telephone interviews may be conducted.
- 9.2.5 In cases where there is lack of evidence to demonstrate the likelihood of success, the Course Coordinator may recommend the international applicant undertake a lower-level qualification prior to being accepted into the TAFE NSW Higher Education course.

## **10. Applications closing dates**

- 10.1 To be considered for entry into a TAFE NSW Higher Education course of study an application must be made by the advertised course application closing date.
- 10.2 Applications received after the application closing date will not be considered unless there are places still available in the course, and the course commencement date has not passed.

## **11. Documentation required to support an application**

- 11.1 Where the application for entry into a course of study requires the submission of documentary evidence, such as transcripts and testamurs of educational achievement, the applicant must provide certified copies of this documentation.
- 11.2 Where the application for entry into a course of study requires the submission of other supporting documentation (e.g.: a written piece of work, a portfolio of the applicant's work), the Course Coordinator must be satisfied with the authenticity of the supporting documentation.
- 11.3 Where the Course Coordinator considers further evidence is required to verify the authenticity of supporting documentation, the applicant can be requested to furnish further evidence. The applicant will not be considered eligible for entry until they provide the further evidence requested.
- 11.4 Where the Course Coordinator considers that documentary evidence provided to support the application is insufficient, the applicant can be requested to provide further evidence.
- 11.5 Applications for admission will not be considered until all requested evidence is provided.

## **12. Documents in a language other than English**

- 12.1 Where official documentation to support an application for admission is in a language other than English, the document must be accompanied by a complete English translation.
- 12.2 Translated documents must comply with the following requirements.
  - 12.2.1 Translations must be by authorised translators accredited by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI).
  - 12.2.2 Each page of the translation must bear the translator's signature, the date translated, and the translator's accreditation details or official stamp.
- 12.3 Translations of official documents by applicants or other non-accredited translators will not be accepted.

12.4 All responsibility in relation to translating official documents, including any costs incurred, must be borne by the applicant. TAFE NSW bears no responsibility in relation to the cost of translation services.

### **13. Student selection**

13.1 Selection methods will be fair and will not exclude or discriminate against applicants in any way.

13.2 Selection criteria and methods will be applied consistently across campuses delivering the same TAFE NSW Higher Education course.

13.3 Entry requirements will reflect the level of qualification.

13.4 Applications for admission will be assessed against the published entry requirements for the course.

13.5 Applicants who meet the entry requirements will be offered a place in the course subject to 13.6.

13.6 In cases where eligible applications exceed available places, a criterion-based points system will be utilised in order to rank applicants. Offers will be made to applicants in rank order.

13.7 The criterion-based points system used to rank applicants will be based on the course specific entry requirements.

13.8 The scope of the criterion-based points system will have been:

- recommended by the Course Advisory Committee; and
- endorsed by the Higher Education Academic Council.

13.9 The detailed content of the criterion-based points system will be developed by the Course Coordinator together with relevant academic staff with recommendations from the Teaching and Learning Committee and approved by the Dean of Higher Education.

### **14. Reviewing eligibility and entry requirements**

14.1 Any changes to course eligibility or entry requirements must be approved by the Higher Education Academic Council following recommendations and advice from the Course Advisory Committee.

### **15. Advising applicants of the result of their application**

15.1 Successful applicants will be made an offer of a place in the course via email.

15.2 Successful applicants will be given a date by which:

- they must accept the offer, or
- they must decline the offer, or
- if no correspondence is received by TAFE NSW Higher Education, be considered as having declined the offer.

15.3 Successful applicants who decline the offer, and who wish to be considered for entry at a subsequent intake, must submit a new application for course entry by the closing date for the subsequent intake.

15.4 Successful applicants who wish to defer entry by up to one calendar year can apply for deferment of entry in accordance with the TAFE NSW Higher Education Progression and Exclusion Procedure.

15.5 Unsuccessful applicants will be advised by email.

## **16. Accepting a place in a course**

- 16.1 Applicants who have been offered a place must formally accept the place in the course of study.
- 16.2 Acceptance of the offer is an indication that the applicant accepts the contractual obligations of accepting a place in the course, including the student's tuition fee obligations.

## **17. Appeals for unsuccessful applicants**

- 17.1 Applicants who are unsuccessful in gaining a place in a TAFE NSW Higher Education course of study may appeal the decision.
- 17.2 A student wishing to appeal may lodge a complaint in accordance with the TAFE NSW Customer Complaints Policy.
- 17.3 If the appeal is successful, the applicant will be offered a place in the course of study.
- 17.4 If the appeal is dismissed, the applicant will not be offered a place in the course of study, however the applicant can reapply for entry at the next or subsequent intakes.

## **18. Recognition of prior learning**

- 18.1 An applicant may apply for credit at the time of application or admission. Refer to TAFE NSW Higher Education Qualifications Pathways and Credit Procedure.
- 18.2 An offer of credit does not guarantee entry into a specific course of study.

## **19. Reporting**

- 19.1 The Course Coordinator will provide an admissions summary report to the Dean of Higher Education and to the Teaching and Learning Committee after each intake.
- 19.2 The Dean of Higher Education will provide a whole of institution admissions summary report to the Higher Education Academic Council after each intake.

## **20. Roles and responsibilities**

- 20.1 Staff involved in student selection and admissions are responsible for the effective administration and implementation of this procedure.
- 20.2 The Course Coordinator has overall responsibility for overseeing the admissions process and making admissions decisions in relation to the course they are coordinating.
- 20.3 The Dean of Higher Education has responsibility for oversight of admissions procedures and for resolving admissions issues identified by the Course Coordinator.
- 20.4 This procedure does not replace or modify any other responsibilities which may arise under other higher education provider policies or under statute or any other law.

## **21. Related documents**

TAFE NSW Higher Education Student Selection and Admissions Policy

TAFE NSW Higher Education Progression and Exclusion Policy and Procedure

TAFE NSW Higher Education Qualifications Pathways and Credit Policy and Procedure

TAFE NSW Higher Education Tuition Fees, Payments, HELP, Refunds and Review Policy and Procedure

TAFE NSW Customer Complaints Policy

## **22. Monitoring and evaluation**

This procedure will be reviewed and updated regularly in line with the TAFE NSW Higher Education Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Framework.

## **23. Publication of this procedure**

The current version of this procedure is published on the TAFE NSW internet.

## **24. Approval**

The TAFE NSW Higher Education Academic Council approved this version of this procedure on 1 June 2023.

*Note: (17 March 2026) Accountable and Responsible Officer roles have been updated since publication, as part of an automated update associated with recent operating model changes. These updates reflect position title or organisational alignment changes only and will be captured in the version history when the document is next reviewed and published.*