

Case Study 4: A course that requires Criminal Record Bureau checks as an entrance requirement, in a small traditional university

Programme of Study:	Adult Nursing degree B740
Total applications received:	202
Places available:	60 maximum (this is a flexible target within NHS contracted training places across the degree and Advanced Nursing Diploma in HE)
Applications per place:	3.4:1
Applicants invited for interview:	141 interviewed for the degree, others are moved to the diploma consideration process
Offers made:	65 (by end June with 13 decisions pending)
Percentage of offers made to applicants:	37%
Standard A-level offer	200 points including A level grades CC plus maths and English GCSE equivalent
Range of accepted A-level achievement	180-380 tariff points
Average tariff score of accepted applicants:	282 (counted from A-levels only)
Proportion of accepted applicants with qualifications other than A-level:	56%. Qualifications include Access to Nursing Studies, and BTEC Health and Social Care.

Selection process

Centralised or devolved selection	Devolved
Is an admissions test required?	No
Are interviews or auditions held?	Applicants are shortlisted for interview - all shortlisted applicants are invited to interview. Interview attendance is a requirement to be considered for an

	offer.
Interview/audition period	Weekly through the year from October to June. Days are normally dedicated to a given nursing branch so not all dates are available in the calendar. Pre-January dates tend to focus on the winter intake.
Equal consideration date	15 January
<p>Policy on considering applications after this date The two start dates for the programme – January and October complicates the matter somewhat. January starters are encouraged to apply early, and have an indicative closing date of 1 December.</p>	

Admissions Policy setting process:

The Faculty set the criteria with reference to the current professional ‘fitness for practice’ standards. The academic offer level is reviewed annually in the context of recent recruitment against target (NB the final intake contract numbers are not finalised until partway through the application cycle) and using analysis of the performance of students on course. Applicants who fail to meet the offer level are considered individually and with the applicant’s agreement are generally transferred to the Advanced Diploma in HE route.

Published entry profile information on required academic criteria and skills:

Candidates are preferred to have had a little experience of observing or working in a health care setting. Satisfactory, enhanced Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) and health checks are required. Two satisfactory references are required (one in addition to UCAS reference) with comment on the reliability, commitment and previous achievements of the applicant. Students must be aged at least 18 at the start of the programme. GCSE Mathematics and English at grade C or above (or equivalent) are mandatory requirements. Standard A-level offer is 200 points to include 2 A levels (maths and English GCSE equivalent condition added as applicable). Access students are required to have 60 credits with at least 45 at level 3. All students are required to be computer-literate before commencing their studies.

Detailed description of process

UCAS applications are received centrally. A positive criminal conviction declaration triggers a request for further information and a University risk assessment prior to Faculty consideration. Any applications with a disability code are referred to Disability Services to liaise with the applicant concerning any likely support needs should they be offered a place.

Applications are considered by the Admission Tutor who shortlists for interview against a set of predetermined criteria including academic profile, previous care experience and commitment to professional training, as shown by the personal statement. Importance is placed on the reference/s as evidence of reliability, commitment and previous achievements. Where evidence of one area is

lacking but the academic background is suitable, the applicant is normally invited to interview and the area discussed. Those not academically qualified for the degree are considered for the related Advanced Diploma in HE. Applications for the diploma are also via UCAS but with a winter and autumn intake the University has an additional indicative application deadline of 1st December for consideration for the winter intake.

Shortlisted applicants are invited to the next available interview day and attendance at interview is mandatory. Wherever possible an interview is held prior to the UCAS Reject by Default deadline. If this is not possible shortlisted candidates are normally made an offer subject to satisfactory interview. Applicants who request an alternate date are normally rescheduled but non-attendees are assumed withdrawn.

Applicants bring to interview original academic certificates and a completed CRB disclosure request, with necessary identification documents. Applicants are asked at interview if they have any convictions, cautions, warnings, reprimands or bind-overs.

A second reference is requested for all shortlisted candidates who are invited to interview and wherever possible an academic and a work-based reference is required for all successful candidates. If necessary a third, or fourth, reference is requested where the first two are lacking in detail or raise any areas of possible concern.

The interview event is a half-day, on-campus event with briefings about the NHS training contract entered into by students and the bursary package. An individual interview follows, the two-person panel normally comprising an academic member of staff and a member of staff of a partner NHS trust. Standard questions are used at interview. Panels' recommendations are scrutinised by the Faculty Admission Tutor for consistency. Any academic conditions are attached and form part of the condition notified through UCAS. Additional conditions are: a satisfactory CRB disclosure and medical. The medical assessment is normally completed a few weeks before the start of the programme but normally only once all academic criteria have been satisfied.

The CRB request is completed for those made an offer. The CRB clearance must be gained before the student commences the programme. A late CRB would be considered on a case-by-case basis as to how to manage the early placement requirements.

If the CRB check reveals any matters not disclosed by the applicant a case-by-case risk assessment normally involves a meeting with the Faculty Admission Tutor and if necessary discussion with a training manager of a partner NHS trust. A NHS Trust/Faculty discussion would normally take place where the CRB disclosure confirmed a previously declared conviction.

There is some manoeuvre possible in target numbers between Advanced Diploma in HE and degree intakes in January and September according to the NHS contracted numbers annually. In a typical year 30-50 degree applicants will be offered entry (or ask to be transferred) to the Advanced Diploma in HE for a range of academic and financial reasons.

Student case studies

Michelle was an 18 year old sixth form college student taking a combination of AS/A-level and A-level double award. Her application for the degree was received from UCAS on 26th November. She was shortlisted as a strong candidate and on 11th December was invited to interview on 9th January. Michelle had a successful interview and received a conditional offer on 14th January which she made her CF. A satisfactory second reference was received later that month and the CRB disclosure received on 12th March was also satisfactory. She achieved A level grades C, C, D and was admitted.

Christopher was an access course student aged 20 who was also taking a numeracy qualification. He has had part-time jobs since passing one Alevel. His application, received on 11th January, was shortlisted and on 12th February he was asked to interview on 12th March. He was found to be a suitable candidate for the degree and a conditional offer was made on 20th March requiring pass of the access course and numeracy, but the second reference was still pending. The CRB disclosure received on 22nd April was clear as was the second reference. Christopher accepted the offer to the degree course as his firm choice, but when his access results were received he was accepted to the Diploma route.

Denise was a mature student who in September started a health-related access course plus GCSE maths and English, with a view towards nurse training. Her application was received on 28th January. She was shortlisted for interview on 15th February and the interview held on 16th April. Denise impressed the Panel and a conditional offer, including passes in maths and English and the access course was sent on 24th April. A strong second reference was received on 30th April and the clear CRB disclosure arrived later in the summer, Denise accepted the offer and passed the access course and GCSEs in order to be admitted.

Suzanne was a mature applicant seeking a career change from her engineering technician role. She had passed a BTEC National certificate in 1995. Her application was received on 27th November and despite no evidence of recent academic study, on 11th December she was invited to attend interview on 9th January. A second reference was requested on 14th December and received on 21st. At interview the nature of the degree and advanced diploma programmes were discussed and Suzanne agreed that the diploma was more suitable for her. She was sent a conditional offer on 14th January for the September intake. Her CRB was received on 11th March. As she was then unconditional in all aspects other than the medical this was arranged for a few weeks later and her place was secured.

Anne was in her late twenties when she applied, having moved to a care role two years ago, after working in animation for several years. Her application was received on 5th October but with no reference. Although Anne appeared to be academically qualified it was not possible to complete the shortlist stage and Anne was asked to provide referee details but the referee could not be reached. Two more referees were nominated and a satisfactory employer reference received on 9th February. Anne was shortlisted and came to interview on 7th May. Anne received a conditional offer on 8th May subject to the standard medical and CRB requirements plus a satisfactory academic reference. All requirements were met and the place was confirmed in early August.

Jade was taking a double award Health and Social Care A-level when she applied on 16th January. On 18th February she was invited to attend interview in mid March but requested a later date. After a further date change Jade was interviewed on 7th May. The Panel did not find that she was sufficiently

motivated for nurse training and she was advised on 8th May that her application had not been successful.