

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS
Faculty of Biological Sciences
TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE ADMISSIONS POLICY
2019

This document outlines the Faculty of Biological Sciences Taught Postgraduate Admissions Policy for 2019 entry. It supports the admissions principles and policies of the University of Leeds, as outlined in the [University of Leeds Taught Postgraduate Admissions Policy](#) and should be considered alongside this document. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The Faculty of Biological Sciences Taught Postgraduate Admissions Policy applies to the following programmes:

MSc Bioscience
MSc Infection, Immunity and Human Disease
MSc Plant Science and Biotechnology
MSc/MRes Biodiversity and Conservation*
MSc/MRes Biodiversity and Conservation with African Field Course*

*These programmes are also offered part time. Please follow the application process as detailed below.

1. Principles

The Faculty of Biological Sciences ensures that the selection process provides equal consideration for applicants who apply by the relevant closing date. All selection decisions are made on the basis of merit and the ability of each applicant to meet the academic and non-academic criteria for admission to the relevant programme of study.

2. Selection Principles

The Faculty of Biological Sciences will treat all applicants fairly and not discriminate unlawfully on grounds of their age; disability; gender; gender identity; pregnancy or maternity status; race; religion or belief; or sexual orientation.

3. Application process

3.1 How to apply

All applicants for taught postgraduate programmes should apply online at <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/students/apply.htm>. Applicants can track the application at each stage of the process through the applicant portal and it is recommended that they check the portal regularly for updates.

For overseas applicants it is important to upload all academic transcripts to the portal to enable us to assess suitability and CAS and Visa documents if the applicant has studied in the UK previously, as failure to upload these may result in a delay to processing the application.

The admissions process is covered by the University's Policy on Equality and Inclusion which is available from the [University's Equality Policy Unit](#).

3.2 General entrance requirements

The typical entrance requirement for the Faculty of Biological Sciences is a good first honours degree of at least a UK upper second class or equivalent. Criteria for entry to individual programmes of study may be higher and applicants are advised to check with the relevant School prior to applying. Exceptions to this academic requirement may be made when applicants can demonstrate significant relevant non-standard experience and their potential for benefiting from the programme is clear.

For programme specific entry requirements please visit:

MSc Bioscience -

<http://www.fbs.leeds.ac.uk/postgraduate/oci.php?c=A990>

MSc Infection, Immunity and Human Disease -

<http://www.fbs.leeds.ac.uk/postgraduate/oci.php?c=G813>

MSc Plant Science and Biotechnology -

<http://www.fbs.leeds.ac.uk/postgraduate/oci.php?c=G065>

MSc/MRes Biodiversity and Conservation -

MSc <http://www.fbs.leeds.ac.uk/postgraduate/oci.php?c=X006>

MRes <http://www.fbs.leeds.ac.uk/postgraduate/oci.php?c=A912>

MSc/MRes Biodiversity and Conservation with African Field Course -

MSc <http://www.fbs.leeds.ac.uk/postgraduate/oci.php?c=G363>

MRes <http://www.fbs.leeds.ac.uk/postgraduate/oci.php?c=G367>

3.3 Application deadlines

Applicants are encouraged to apply as early as possible for taught postgraduate programmes. The Faculty of Biological Sciences will only assess applications which are complete before the application closing date, where one applies. The following programmes operate an application closing date:

Biodiversity and Conservation – all variants – 31st March 2019

The other courses listed in this policy do not have an application deadline.

If the applicant intends to apply for funding, they should submit an application for a place at least one month before any specific scholarship deadline.

International students are particularly advised to submit applications as early as possible to ensure they have sufficient time to obtain a visa and prepare for arrival in the UK. Furthermore, an offer of a place is needed for many of the scholarships available to international students and closing dates can often be early in the year.

3.4 International/ Overseas students

Teaching, assessment and student support will take place in English, unless otherwise stated. Schools must be confident that candidates have the proficiency in English language necessary to succeed on the chosen programme of study and that they meet the UKVI (UK Visas and Immigration) minimum requirements to obtain a Tier 4 visa.

All applications from international students are considered in line with our standard entrance requirements. Proof of English Language proficiency will be required and minimum levels and approved tests for the Faculty of Biological Sciences can be found in the [University of Leeds Taught Postgraduate Admissions Policy](#).

Where an applicant does not meet the English language requirements for the academic course, but does meet the requirements for the University of Leeds pre-session English Language summer courses, they may be eligible for a combined offer for the pre-session and Taught Postgraduate programme. Applicants will be informed via their offer letter if they are eligible for a combined offer, for which they will need to opt in. Applicants with a combined offer needing a CAS will receive a single CAS for the duration of their studies. Applicants must attend and pass the pre-session course in order to progress onto the Taught Postgraduate programme. Failure to do so will result in the applicant being unable to join the Taught Postgraduate programme. Applicants can opt out of this route in favour of meeting the English Language requirement by completing one of the English Language tests detailed in Appendix A, Section 2, by declining the offer and contacting tp_applications@leeds.ac.uk.

Admissions staff are experienced in considering a wide range of international qualifications against programme entry requirements. Prospective applicants who wish to discuss whether their qualifications will meet the necessary entry criteria should contact the School admissions office directly.

Further information for prospective international applicants can be found on the [University of Leeds international student webpages](#).

Overseas applicants and applicants from non-EU countries should note that student visa regulations will not normally allow study on a part-time basis.

3.5 Admissions intake

All programmes within the Faculty of Biological Sciences aim to recruit the highest calibre students, with all places awarded on merit. The allocation of student places is set for each programme on an annual basis.

3.6 Advanced Entry

Accreditation of prior learning is a process undertaken by the University in order to assess and, as appropriate, recognise prior experiential learning or prior certificated learning for academic purposes. This recognition may give the learning a credit value and allow it to be counted towards the completion of a programme of study. Credit Transfer is the process by

which the University accepts credit arising from prior certificated learning, either awarded by itself or another institution, as contributing to an award of the University.

Any decision on credit transfer or entry of students with advanced standing is an academic decision taken within the relevant School at the point of admission onto a programme of study.

Further details of the University's policy can be found [on our webpage](#).

4. Selection process

Academic grades normally form only one part of the final decision and the following sections give examples of how applicants may demonstrate that they have the skills, knowledge and attributes that we believe will enable them to become a successful student in the Faculty of Biological Sciences.

Relevant voluntary or work experience may be taken into account. The applicant would be required to demonstrate that this experience is substantial and relevant to their chosen programme of study. Research publications may be taken into consideration if they demonstrate significant expertise in a relevant field.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to include a CV to provide more detailed information about their prior educational and work experience. Our supporting statement form should also be completed to provide further information about their suitability for their chosen programme of study and the reasons for their choice of programme.

Our supporting statement form can be accessed via the following link:

<http://www.fbs.leeds.ac.uk/postgraduate/howtoapply.php>

4.1 Interviews

The Faculty of Biological Sciences does not typically undertake interviews with applicants; however, in certain circumstances programme leaders may invite an applicant to interview as part of the selection procedure. This may allow us to further assess the applicant's aptitude and interest in the programme in the cases where the applicant's circumstances are not straightforward.

If invited to interview, the applicant will receive an email invitation from the Faculty to attend an interview on a specific date. We will do our best to accommodate requests for an alternative date but this cannot be guaranteed.

Interviews may take place via a number of alternative means depending on the circumstances of the applicant. For example, interviews may take place on a one to one basis or via Skype, video conferencing or telephone particularly for overseas applicants.

Some applicants (for example, disabled applicants, applicants who are pregnant, etc.) will require adjustments at interview (for example, a sign-language interpreter or an adjustment to an audition process) to provide them with full and equal access to the process. The Faculty is responsible for making reasonable adjustments where possible. The University's Disability Services team should be consulted for further advice or information regarding

disability related adjustments (email disability@leeds.ac.uk) and the Equality Policy Unit for advice on other adjustments (email equality@leeds.ac.uk).

4.2 Offers

Offers are made on the basis of merit and the ability of each applicant to meet the academic and non-academic criteria for admission to the relevant programme of study. Offers are made based on the information supplied on the application form, and where required, proof of English Language as detailed in section 2.4

The Faculty of Biological Sciences requires an academic transcript before any offer can be made, and for some courses will also require a supporting statement and CV.

The [University of Leeds Taught Postgraduate Admissions Policy](#) gives further detail on the type of offers that are made.

4.3 Unsuccessful applicants

Unsuccessful applicants may wish to request feedback on the reason for the outcome of their application. All requests for feedback should be made via the applicant portal. Generally where applicants request feedback on why they have not been admitted, feedback will be given.

The University's policy on providing feedback to applicants can be found in the [University of Leeds Taught Postgraduate Admissions Policy](#).

4.4 Complaints

The Faculty of Biological Sciences will consider all applications fairly and effectively in line with the procedures outlined in this document and the [University of Leeds Taught Postgraduate Admissions Policy](#). Applicants who wish to challenge a decision to reject their application should write to Mr Paul Matthews, Faculty of Biological Sciences, University of Leeds, Leeds, LS2 9JT, UK, detailing the nature of their complaint. The complaint must typically be made within 14 days of the decision.

Full details of the complaints procedure can be found in the University of Leeds [Postgraduate Admissions Policy](#).

4.5 Age and Safeguarding

The University recognises someone's young age (if under 18) or safeguarding position may need to be taken into account. For full details of the University policy please see the University [Safeguarding Policy](#).

The Faculty of Biological Sciences does not currently have any age restrictions attached to any of our programmes.

4.6 Disabled applicants

The Faculty of Biological Sciences welcomes applications from disabled people¹. The University will make appropriate adjustments, to help ensure that disabled applicants have full and equal access to our admissions procedures and courses. Information about disability is not used when considering academic eligibility for the chosen programme of study. It is reviewed in order to identify the potential study-related support requirements, and the eligibility for disability-related support funding, so that the University can ensure the applicant is supported effectively on the course.

The University will always aim to make appropriate adjustments for disabled applicants. However, applicants who choose not to declare their disability should be aware that it may be more difficult, or in rare cases impossible, to make the appropriate adjustments. Applicants are invited to indicate their disability status on their application form and we strongly encourage applicants to declare any disability. Disabled applicants are also advised to contact the University's Disability Services team (part of the University's Student Education Service) once an application has been submitted, to discuss any support requirements they may have in relation to the programme for which they have applied. Disability Services can be contacted at disability@leeds.ac.uk.

The admissions process is covered by the University's Policy on Equality and Inclusion which is available from the [University's Equality Policy Unit](#).

4.7 Applicants with a health-related issue or other mitigating circumstance

This section deals with health-related issues,² which are distinct from disability-related issues. Applicants with a health-related issue should contact the relevant Admissions contact as soon as possible if their health is likely to impact on their ability to engage with the admissions process. The University aims to be flexible in such circumstances and to take such issues into account.

If a candidate feels that their prior ill-health – or personal circumstances other than ill-health (for example, bereavement or other difficult home or family circumstances) – may have affected their previous education, or the grades they received in past examinations, then they are also welcome to contact the School to discuss this further. All formal requests for mitigating circumstances to be taken into account in the admissions process should be supported by a full declaration about the nature of the circumstances.

¹ The University is committed to the social model of disability and in line with the definition under the Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone with a physical or mental impairment which is long-term (lasting 12 months or more) and which has a substantial impact on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The definition of disability includes long-term medical conditions such as cancer, HIV/AIDS and MS (in each case from the point of diagnosis) and may include epilepsy, diabetes, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/ME amongst others.

² Which are not classed as a "disability".

4.8 Support for applicants who are pregnant

In line with the University policy on support for students who are pregnant or have young children (available from [the Equality Policy Unit website](#)), applicants who are pregnant are advised to inform their Admissions Tutor/Officer at an early stage. This is so that consideration can be given to appropriate support being available from the start of their programme of study.

4.9 Guidance for trans applicants

Applicants who do not wish to disclose their trans status to the faculty/school admissions team for a programme of study but require their status to be changed should contact the Taught Admissions Office taught-admissions@leeds.ac.uk and the team will be able to support the applicant through the process. The University will be required to carry out identity checks as part of the registration process, and/or taught admissions staff may be required to advise the relevant Faculty Admissions Manager of a status change in order to facilitate removal of any previous documentation, however these will be undertaken confidentially and with sensitivity. Full guidance to support trans staff and students can be found on [Equality Policy Unit website](#).

4.10 Applicants seeking deferred entry

The Faculty of Biological Sciences considers a deferred applicant as one who currently holds an offer but wishes to change the year of entry to the following academic year, or one who applies for the following academic year from the outset. Applicants who wish to defer an offer of a place to the following academic year should contact the Academic School by 1st April 2020. Only applicants with an unconditional offer, or who have an offer conditional on English language are able to defer. Deferral of a place to study is at the discretion of the Faculty of Biological Sciences and is strictly limited to a maximum of one academic year following the year of initial application. Except where a 2 year time limit is placed on an English Language qualification, any offer made will not be subject to change.

Applicants who request deferral for more than one academic year or who request a deferral after the above deadline will be required to reapply. Such candidates should be aware that no guarantee can be given that another offer will be made and that the conditions of any future offer may differ to those of the original.

Applicants who wish to defer an offer of a place to the following academic year should request so via their online application portal.

4.11 Applicants wishing to reapply

Any decision on the eligibility of applicants who have previously held an offer of a place but failed to achieve the academic conditions at first attempt will be an academic judgement. Such candidates should be aware that no guarantee can be given that another offer will be made, and that the conditions of any future offer may differ to those of the original.

4.12 Former students of the University

The University of Leeds welcomes applications from candidates who have previously studied at this institution. Where appropriate, such candidates may be able to apply for Advanced Entry (see 3.6 above).

Candidates who have been withdrawn from their earlier studies due to academic failure may apply for re-entry to the University, but not to the same or a closely related programme of study, i.e. where over half of the compulsory modules are identical. Candidates who previously left the University due to non-academic reasons e.g. ill health, financial reasons, will not be subject to this condition.

Applications from candidates who have been permanently excluded (expelled) from the University for disciplinary reasons, those who have been excluded under the Referred Student Procedure or for reasons of misconduct or fitness to train in a professionally-regulated discipline will be rejected.

Applicants should contact the school for further information.

4.13 Criminal convictions

The University has a [policy statement on students with criminal records](#). This policy includes applicants seeking admission. It should be noted that if an applicant is required to disclose a criminal offence and fails to do so this will generally be considered a very serious matter and is likely to lead to their application being rejected or, if they have registered as a student, to their registration at the University being revoked.

Having a prior criminal record will not necessarily prevent an applicant from being offered a place; this may depend, for example, on the nature, timing and relevance of the criminal offence in question. The University may request further information about the nature or context of an applicant's criminal record.

Where indicated in the prospectus or on the University's website, specific programmes may involve regular access to children and/or vulnerable adults, and applicants may be required to undertake with satisfactory results, certain checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service. The University will send further instructions as part of the admissions process where this is the case.

4.14 Course start date and arrival

The course start date is indicated clearly in the offer letter alongside the period of study and applicants must ensure that they are able to attend their course from this date. The University reserves the right to refuse admission to those offer holders who arrive after this date. Should there be any possibility of a delay to arrival, offer holders should seek advice from the appropriate School admissions office before travelling.

5. Opportunities to visit

5.1 Faculty open days

Applicants who wish to visit the Faculty of Biological Sciences may book an appointment by contacting the Admissions Office using the contact details given at the end of this document. The Faculty holds online webinar sessions during the year where applicants can find out more about the course and studying at Leeds. These are an excellent way to ask questions and speak to academics teaching on the postgraduate programmes.

Information on Faculty or University Open Days can be found on our website at:

http://www.leeds.ac.uk/homepage/35/postgraduate_open_days

6. Scholarships & funding

The University of Leeds currently offers a wide range of scholarships and bursaries that provide funding for students to undertake undergraduate study at the University. Further details can be found on our [webpages](#).

6.1 University Scholarships

Postgraduate students at Leeds benefit from around £10m of funding from the University and externally. [Postgraduate scholarships](#) are available to eligible international, UK and EU students.

6.2 Faculty level scholarships information

Further details of School level scholarships can be found on our website at

<http://www.fbs.leeds.ac.uk/postgraduate/scholarships.php>

7. Contact details

Application enquiries

Admissions enquiries to the Faculty of Biological Sciences should be directed to:

FBS Admissions Team

Tel: +44(0) 113 343 1418

Email: fbspgt@leeds.ac.uk

Last updated by Paul Matthews 31st May 2018