

## **ADMISSIONS STATEMENT FOR 2023 ENTRANTS**

### **Will it be more competitive in 2023?**

At UWS we appreciate that applying to a university is a first-time experience for many students, whether you are a school leaver, applying from college or an adult returning to education, the process of applying to a university as well as the challenges associated with COVID19 have added uncertainty to the process.

As in previous years we are expecting a similar demand for places in 2023 as we know many of you are keen, despite all the uncertainty, to progress to university study and we want to reassure you that we welcome and consider each and every application we receive.

The vast majority of applicants receive offers from us, even for our highly popular courses- don't forget that you can apply for up to 5 university/course choices. In many cases we do receive more applications than there are places available which in turn makes that course competitive. At UWS some of our applicants apply to more than one course with us, and we are happy to receive multiple choices.

### **Academic Entry Requirements**

Our academic entry requirements have increased for entry in 2023 however we will continue to be flexible and welcoming with all applications we receive. Some of our courses are highly competitive (such as Adult Nursing, Mental Health Nursing, Midwifery, Paramedic Science and Education), but in all cases our approach is to consider every part of your application, including the additional merits of potential such as work experience and your potential to succeed, to make you an offer or invite you to interview. The average overall UCAS tariff on entry at UWS is around 108-126 UCAS points (around BBBB for SQA Highers is typical), but we accept a range of grades across the UCAS tariff.

We also welcome applications from college applicants with HNC or HND qualifications where, depending on the course, we may ask you to achieve certain grades in your graded unit for a particular point of entry. Our applicant profile also includes applicants from the SWAP Access course who are very important to UWS, as SWAP applicants are mostly adult returners making our student profile incredibly dynamic.

At UWS our students come from over 30 countries worldwide – so our admissions team are experienced in making offers to a wide range of international qualifications. We'll be regularly looking at the impact of COVID19 on study across the UK and beyond. Where relevant, we may revise our typical requirements to ensure they remain fair for all applicants this year, for example if a particular qualification experience delays or cancellations. Any changes for this reason will be to your advantage – we may remove or lower academic requirements, but we will not add or increase requirements.

### **Contextual Admissions**

UWS has always been dedicated to opening the doors to higher education and are proud of our broad student population. At UWS we review each applicant on their individual merit considering not only their qualifications but their life experience, work experience and background. As part of the Commission on Widening Access (COWA) and Universities Scotland's publication 'Working to Widen Access' universities have been asked to review, evaluate and refine their approaches to contextualised admissions. In addition, it was announced by the Scottish Government that for entry in 2020 all Scottish Universities would

provide a guaranteed offer for care experience applicants who meet the minimum entry requirements, wherever that is possible. As a result, UWS have now set thresholds that separate our standard entrance requirements to aid the progression of learners into higher education from the most disadvantaged backgrounds, by setting standard and minimum entry requirements necessary to successfully complete a degree course. Therefore, any care-experienced applicant or applicants from SIMD20/40 areas who satisfies the minimum entry requirements will be guaranteed an offer, or for controlled courses which require an interview, will be guaranteed an interview.

In addition, when making offers other widening access factors will be taken into account including whether applicants attend a FOCUS West school, live within an SIMD20 postcode, are a student carer, care-leaver or estranged student. This will be reviewed regularly in line with government guidelines.

UWS also recognises the importance of an applicant's potential to succeed and will issue unconditional offers to applicants based on predicted grades where there is a proven academic track record. As such, we believe that these students have already demonstrated their ability and potential to succeed on the course they have applied for.

## **Interviews – online for 2023 entry**

For several of our competitive courses, where we have more applications than places available, an interview will be arranged with our academic colleagues meaning that an offer will only be processed if you are successful at interview stage. The majority of our interviews for 2023 entry will take place online, either via Zoom or Microsoft teams, between December 2022-May 2023 unless the situation changes.

If you are invited to interview you will be sent a link to an information sheet that provides details on what to expect, the interview format and how to make the most of an online interview. If you are physically attending school or college, it would be wise to speak to your Guidance Teacher or College Tutor informing them you'll be taking part in online interviews during December-May as, if you are not learning online, they may need to provide space, time and a room for you to take part. You will need access to a PC/camera, mic and the session will normally be via Microsoft Teams or Zoom, which is free to use.

While there will not be a dress code for these on-screen interviews, consider your audience and how you come across in a relaxed and professional way, relevant to the industry or career you would like to work in!

## **Unconditional offers**

We'll continue our fair and transparent unconditional offer policy in 2023 for our recruiting courses, and also for our controlled courses where an online interview will form part of the selection process. For other courses you may receive an unconditional offer as a result of your qualification grades (or equivalent), grades already achieved, academic reference, predicted grades, personal statement and other additional merits of potential.

In all cases we would expect you to continue working and to sit exams and assessments even if you have received one of our unconditional offers. This is part of the trust we place in our students and in making a commitment to them with an unconditional offer.

## **Disruption for schools, colleges and examinations**

Most students applying in 2023 will have experienced some disruption to their education through the closure of schools and colleges during 2021 and 2022 in the UK and around the world. At UWS we do not wish our applicants to have suffered a detrimental impact to their entry to university study based on the impact of school or college closures and so we are mindful of these challenges when assessing final results, should overall performance be lower than normal. We are continually monitoring the situation in other countries for our international applicants too.

While we consider general disruption to schools as part of our normal consideration, we appreciate you may experience specific circumstances (related or unrelated to COVID19) which may affect your ability to perform academically and will of course take these into consideration when considering your application.

## **If you have results and qualifications from 2022**

If you achieved your final qualifications last year and meet our typical offer for your chosen degree (after any relevant interview, if this applies) then we will be able to consider and accept those results as normal. If you are resitting some or all of your qualifications from 2022, we know that the circumstances for any awards in 2022 may not reflect your ability, and as such, you will not be penalised for any lower results in 2023.

## **UCAS Personal statements and references, including work experience**

Due to COVID-19 we understand that many of you may have struggled to get work experience to evidence your interest in the course and support your application to the university.

UWS will think flexibly about work experience and not penalise you for limitations to this. However, we would encourage you to think about what you can do, rather than what you have missed. Have you read up on your course or career so you can demonstrate that on your application? Have you accessed any virtual opportunities such as webinars and experiences that provide an insight?

If you have been volunteering or working, talk about your transferable skills. Try to reflect on how you have adapted to the situation in your personal statement and any interviews you attend. It will be particularly important in your Personal Statement to talk about the relevance of relatable skills. What do you know, why do you want to do the course and what difference do you want to make? If there are particular skills you know will be needed for your course, such as group work, develop any skills you might need to strengthen such as confidence or communicating to others. It's also worth remembering that everyone is in the same situation as you. Don't forget that we are finding reasons to make you an offer or invite you to an interview, not finding reasons to reject you! We also encourage your Guidance Teachers or College Tutors to briefly add any COVID19 context on the reference, e.g. how your school/college has adapted to the challenges and what the typical arrangements are.

## **Residency status**

Your '*tuition fees status*' is determined by your nationality and the country where you normally live. Like other universities, UWS charges different fees dependent on your '*tuition fee status*.' We will automatically determine your tuition fee status based on information you supply about yourself during the application process. If we can't determine your tuition fee status automatically, we will ask you to complete a fee status questionnaire providing more information to enable the university to make an accurate assessment.

As always, please keep in touch with us with any queries or questions and we look forward to your application. At UWS we are committed to supporting our students to be the best they can be, before, during and after their time with us.