

ACADEMIC REGULATION A2: ADMISSION AND ENROLMENT

INTRODUCTION

The entry requirements for each course of the University are defined in terms of stated qualifications or their equivalents, and are intended to facilitate assessment of the candidate's ability to meet the demands of the course. Where Recognition of Prior Learning is permitted as a route for entry, responsibility rests with the applicant for making the claim to relevant knowledge and skills and also for supporting the claim with appropriate evidence. The University may require an applicant to submit to an entrance assessment. Admission to an appropriate point in a course may be permitted where evidence exists that an applicant has fulfilled particular progression requirements of the course.

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REGULATION

1. PRINCIPLES OF ADMISSION

- 1.1 The University seeks to ensure equality of opportunity for all applicants.
- 1.2 The principal academic criterion for determining a candidate's suitability for admission to a course within the University is that there is a reasonable expectation that they will be able to fulfil the learning outcomes of the course, meet any relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements and achieve the standard required for the award. In making judgements regarding admission, both positive and negative indicators will be considered. In cases where an applicant has previously failed to complete the same or substantially similar course then positive and negative indicators may include any additional qualifications and/or experience gained in the interim period and the level/stage at which failure occurred.
- 1.3 All applicants shall be required to declare on their application form whether they are currently an enrolled student of the University or have previously been so. Failure to accurately complete the declaration may result in disciplinary action being taken in accordance with [Regulation A3, Section 2: Student Conduct Procedure](#), and may result in termination of enrolment.
- 1.4 Applicants shall declare criminal convictions in accordance with the relevant application process for their chosen course of study. Offers may be withdrawn, or enrolments terminated if, as determined by the relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body, or by a University risk assessment, convictions prevent applicants from undertaking their course.
- 1.5 Admission to more than one course of the University shall be subject to the approval of the relevant School(s).

2. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

- 2.1 In addition to the requirements of [paragraph 1.2](#) of this Regulation, the minimum level of attainment normally required for entry to the start of courses leading to awards at first degree level shall be equivalent to passes in five subjects of the Scottish Qualifications Certificate of which three shall be at Higher grade, or in four subjects all at Higher grade. The equivalent GCE/GCSE requirement shall be two passes at Advanced level in the General Certificate of Education (GCE A level) supported by passes in three other subjects in the General Certificate of School Education (GCSE).
- 2.2 The minimum level of attainment normally required for entry to the start of a course leading to University awards of Certificate/Diploma of Higher Education shall be equivalent to passes in five subjects of the Scottish Qualifications Certificate of which two shall be at Higher Grade.
- 2.3 Prospective entrants may offer other patterns of passes equivalent to these levels of attainment. The University also accepts a variety of vocational, professional and other qualifications for entry purposes such as Scottish Qualifications Authority qualifications,

EdExcel awards, SVQ/NVQ, Open University qualifications, access and foundation courses, international and overseas qualifications.

- 2.4 Some courses may require entrants to have reached a standard above the minimum level for entry in one or more specified subjects; candidates for entry should consult the entrance requirements for courses contained in the University prospectus.

English Language Proficiency

- 2.5 The language of instruction at the University is English and proficiency in speaking, listening to, reading and writing English is essential. Students whose first language is not English, or who originate from countries whose national language is not English, are additionally required to demonstrate English language proficiency to the standard required by the University and published on its website (www.rgu.ac.uk/elr) and, where appropriate, in accordance with current UK legislation.
- 2.6 Exceptionally, there may be a requirement for more stringent English language competency in some courses and this shall be set out in the relevant Course Specification.

3. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE DEGREES

- 3.1 In addition to the requirements of [paragraph 1.2](#) of this Regulation, to be eligible for admission, an applicant shall normally possess either a relevant honours degree or any other qualification deemed by Academic Council to be acceptable for this purpose.

English Language Proficiency

- 3.2 The language of instruction at the University is English and proficiency in speaking, listening to, reading and writing English is essential. Students whose first language is not English, or who originate from countries whose national language is not English, are additionally required to demonstrate English language proficiency to the standard required by the University and published on its website (www.rgu.ac.uk/elr) and, where appropriate, in accordance with current UK legislation.
- 3.3 Exceptionally, there may be a requirement for more stringent English language competency in some courses and this shall be set out in the relevant Course Specification.

4. RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

- 4.1 The University recognises two types of prior learning - certificated (RPCL) and experiential (RPEL) - which may facilitate the following:
- (i) entry to the first stage of a course for which the applicant does not possess the necessary entry qualifications;
 - (ii) advanced entry to a course;

(iii) exemption from specific modules/elements of a course, e.g. the work placement.

4.2 Any such claim shall normally be submitted at the time of application to the course. In relation to [paragraph 4.1\(iii\)](#), an enrolled student may submit an RPL claim following commencement of a module. Any such claim must normally be submitted no later than ten working days following the start of the module. The student shall be advised of the outcome of the RPL claim normally no later than ten working days following the submission of the claim.

4.3 (i) The Course/Programme Management Team, operating with delegated authority from Academic Council, must decide whether the candidate has achieved the learning outcomes associated with elements of their chosen course as a result of their prior learning. It is the learning arising from the candidate's experience which should be accredited and not the experience itself. One exception to this rule is where candidates are seeking exemption from the work placement element of a course, in which case their prior work experience would be taken into consideration. Discussion at a meeting of a Course/Programme Management Team on any particular student case shall be reserved business.

(ii) The simultaneous double-counting of credit for the same module towards two or more awards of the University shall not be permitted. In such circumstances where exemptions cannot be granted, alternative modules may be selected on the advice of the Course/Programme Management Team.

4.4 The requirements of the relevant professional body should be carefully considered by Course/Programme Management Teams. In particular, there may be restrictions on a candidate's entitlement to exemptions from modules on professionally-recognised courses.

Maximum Credit per RPL Claim

4.5 Credit per RPL Claim applies to both Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL) and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL). Any claim shall be subject to the approval of the Course/Programme Management Teams.

Intended Final Award's SCQF Credit Value	Maximum RPCL/RPEL Claim	SCQF Credits that must be achieved at the University
60	30	30
120	60	60
180	90	90
240	135, with only 15 credits permitted in the award-bearing stage	105
360	255, with only 15 credits permitted in the award-bearing stage	105
480	375, with only 15 credits permitted in the award-bearing stage	105

For both undergraduate and postgraduate awards exceptions to the minimum period of enrolment must be approved in advance by Academic Council or the Academic Development Committee on its behalf. Following such approval details must be clearly stated in the Course Specification.

Provision for RPL for Professional Doctorates shall be specified within the Course Specification.

4.6 Obligations

- (i) Responsibility for operating the RPL scheme rests with the appropriate School.
- (ii) The candidate is responsible for making the claim to have their prior learning accredited recognised in accordance with [paragraph 4.2](#).
- (iii) Where candidates qualify for entry with advanced standing, they may gain exemption from the whole or part of a stage of study. Where candidates are exempt from specific modules as a result of their prior learning, this should be indicated on each student's record and reported at the appropriate Assessment Board. Candidates' portfolios of evidence should be retained on the student file.

4.7 Determination of Final Award

For candidates who gain entry with advanced standing as a result of a successful claim to have their prior learning accredited the final award will be based on the remaining non-exempt part (refer also to [paragraph 4.5](#) of this Regulation).

4.8 Charging Arrangements

All candidates shall be entitled to an initial interview to discuss their claim for RPL. This interview will be provided free of charge and shall enable candidates to decide if they wish to proceed with making a full claim. If they do wish to proceed, they should be informed of any fee(s) they will be charged, details of which can be obtained from the University's Financial Services Department.

5. APPEALS PROCEDURE FOR APPLICANTS

The University operates an appeals procedure for all applicants to the University, undergraduate, postgraduate and research degree. Further details can be found in [Schedule 2.1 of this Regulation](#).

6. ENROLMENT AND RE-ENROLMENT

- 6.1 Each student of the University shall enrol at the time of initial admission to a course and re-enrol every twelve months during the period in which they undertake the course*.
- 6.2 To be eligible to enrol every twelve months, a student shall have either:
- (i) complied with the requirements for student progress prescribed for their particular course and have received notification of permission to proceed to the subsequent stage of the course; or
 - (ii) received notification of permission to re-attend the whole or part of the course for which they are enrolled.
- 6.3 A student who enrolls for a course of full-time or part-time study leading to an award of the University, or who enrolls for a course offered by the University but leading to an award of another body, shall be deemed to be an enrolled student of the University and shall receive an enrolment card.
- 6.4 As part of the enrolment procedure a student, including those designated as associate students, shall formally acknowledge that they accepts and will abide by the University Regulations.

7. MAXIMUM PERIOD OF ENROLMENT

- 7.1 The maximum period of enrolment shall be defined by the requirements of the particular award. This is detailed in [paragraphs 7.2 to 7.8](#) of this Regulation, except for Research Degrees and Higher Doctorates, which are covered by [Regulation A6: Research Degrees](#) and [Regulation](#)

* Or such other period as agreed between the Course/Programme Management Team and the University's Academic Administration Department

A7: Higher Doctorates respectively. Any approved deviations from the normal period of enrolment to meet professional, regulatory or statutory body requirements shall be specified within individual Course Specifications.

Undergraduate

- 7.2 Normally the maximum period from the time of first enrolment for undergraduate awards shall be as follows (refer also to [paragraph 9](#) of this Regulation):

	Course Duration (Years)	Maximum Period of Enrolment (Years)	
Undergraduate Award	Full-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
Degree course	5	7	11
Degree course	4	6	9
Degree course	3	5	7
DipHE	2	3	5
CertHE	1	2	3

Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas

	Course Duration	Maximum Period of Enrolment (Years)	
Undergraduate Award	Full-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
Graduate Diploma	30 weeks	2	3
Graduate Certificate	15 weeks	2	2

- 7.3 The maximum permissible period of enrolment for part-time study shall include any period of time during which the candidate was enrolled as a full-time student of the University.
- 7.4 The maximum period of enrolment for a candidate gaining advanced entry to an approved course shall be the same as for other students on the course from that point.
- 7.5 In exceptional circumstances, Academic Council¹ may extend the period of enrolment.

1 and 2 For the purposes of Regulation A2, paragraphs 7.5 and 7.8, the Vice-Principal for Academic Development and Student Experience shall act with delegated authority on behalf of Academic Council.

Postgraduate

- 7.6 The Course Specification shall state the duration of the course for the award. Normally, these shall be:
- (i) for Certificate courses: 15 weeks of full-time study or 30 weeks part-time study;
 - (ii) for Diploma courses: 30 weeks of full-time study or 60 weeks part-time study;
 - (iii) for the Master's Degree: 45 weeks of full-time study or 90 weeks part-time study.
- 7.7 Normally, the maximum period from the time of first enrolment shall be 52 weeks for full-time study and 104 weeks for part-time study over and above the normal period of completion.
- 7.8 In exceptional circumstances, Academic Council² may extend the period of enrolment.

8. TRANSFER OF ENROLMENT TO ANOTHER COURSE

- 8.1 A student may transfer between courses leading to an award at the same level as that for which they were initially enrolled.
- 8.2 Any such transfer shall require the permission of the Course/Programme Management Team for the course to which the student is seeking to transfer. Where such permission is withheld, a student may appeal in accordance with [Regulation A2, Schedule 2.1 Appeals Procedure for Applicants](#).
- 8.3 The Course/Programme Management Team responsible for the course to which the student is transferring shall determine the conditions of transfer.
- 8.4 Transferring between courses may impact on a student's Tier 4 student visa status. Therefore, prior to seeking a transfer, international students studying on a Tier 4 student visa should consult with an International Student Adviser.

9. TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF STUDIES

- 9.1 A student who has cause to suspend their studies may be permitted by the School Academic Board, which will be advised by the Course/Programme Management Team, to defer proceeding for a specified period not normally exceeding one year. In this regard, the School Academic Board shall have delegated authority from Academic Council to make decisions on its behalf. Normally, a student shall be permitted to suspend study only once during their period of enrolment.

- 9.2 When granting such permission the School Academic Board shall specify, if appropriate, the assessment opportunities which shall be available to the student on the resumption of their studies and shall consider the most appropriate point of re-entry to the course.
- 9.3 An agreed period of suspension shall not be included in the period of enrolment (refer to [Regulation A1, paragraph 4](#)) unless there are specific professional, statutory and/or regulatory body reasons for doing so.

10. RE-ADMISSION

- 10.1 A student who elects to leave the course prior to the final stage and to accept the award appropriate to the part of the course which has been successfully completed shall be entitled to seek re-admission to the course at a later date. The terms of any such re-admission shall be at the discretion of the University, and specifically shall take account of any changes in the content of the course which have been made since the applicant's previous attendance. Where the course and/or modules have changed since the student exited then it might not be appropriate to carry module grades forward. Instead, such modules shall be recorded as credit transfer, i.e. 'CT'. Any such decisions shall be at the discretion of the Course/Programme Management Team.
- 10.2 Where such an applicant is re-admitted and subsequently satisfies the requirements for a higher level of award in the course concerned, they shall be eligible to receive the higher award only on agreeing to relinquish the lower level award previously accepted.

SCHEDULE 2.1: APPEALS PROCEDURE FOR APPLICANTS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The University is committed to providing a high level of service to all applicants during the application and admission process.

2. INFORMAL FEEDBACK

- 2.1 Any applicant who is dissatisfied with the outcome of an application for admission or is denied permission to transfer should, in the first instance, seek feedback in accordance with the [Applicant Feedback Procedure](#). If the applicant remains dissatisfied following receipt of the feedback then the applicant may formally appeal the outcome in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 4 below.

3. GROUNDS FOR APPEAL

Appeals against the outcome of an application shall only be considered on the following grounds:

- significant new information in support of the application is now available which was not available at the time of the original decision on the application; and/or
- the University has not adhered to its own policies and procedures.

4. APPEAL PROCEDURE

4.1 Stage One: Appeal

- 4.1.1 Any applicant seeking to appeal the outcome of an application should submit an [Admissions Appeal Form](#). The form, with any accompanying evidence, should be submitted to the Head of Student Admissions Service, normally no later than ten working days³ following receipt of the feedback (paragraph 1.2 of this Schedule). Only exceptionally would an appeal be accepted beyond that period and only where the Head of Student Admissions Service is satisfied that there are verifiable, evidenced circumstances which were outwith the control of the applicant.

Where the Head of Student Admissions Service determines that there are no such circumstances then the [Admissions Appeal Form – Continuation of Appeal](#) will not be considered and the Head of Student Admissions Service shall advise the applicant accordingly.

- 4.1.2 Receipt of the [Admission Appeal Form](#) will be acknowledged, by email. If no email address is available then a letter acknowledging receipt will be sent to the applicant by first class mail.

³ And henceforth, “working days” are Monday to Friday and excludes days that the University is closed.

- 4.1.3 The *Head of Student Admissions Service* and a representative from the School relevant to the application will consider the [Admission Appeal Form](#) and will provide the applicant with a response to the appeal normally no later than ten working days following receipt of the *Admission Appeal Form*.

4.2 Stage Two: Continuation of Appeal

- 4.2.1 If an applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Stage One Appeal then they may choose to continue with the Appeal by submitting the [Admissions Appeal Form – Continuation of Appeal](#) to the *Head of Student Admissions Service* normally no later than 10 working days following receipt of the outcome of the Stage One Appeal.
- 4.2.2 Receipt of the [Admission Appeal Form](#) will be acknowledged, by email. If no email address is available then a letter acknowledging receipt will be sent to the applicant by first class mail.
- 4.2.3 A University Admission Appeal Panel will consider any [Admission Appeal Form – Continuation of Appeal](#). The Panel will consist of:

Undergraduate and Postgraduate

- Dean not associated with the applicant's School of study (Convener);
- Deputy Academic Registrar;
- Dean (or nominee) relevant to the application.

Research Degrees

- Dean not associated with the applicant's School of study (Convener);
- Deputy Academic Registrar;
- Dean of Graduate School.

Exceptionally a Panel member may identify a nominee to attend the Panel on their behalf.

- 4.2.4 An applicant may only appeal once in relation to an application. If an applicant has applied for more than one course in the same admissions cycle and the appeal is applicable to all of the applications then only one *Admission Appeal Form* should be submitted.
- 4.2.5 If an applicant makes any alteration to the grounds of their appeal at any time after its initial lodgement then the appeal shall be deemed invalid.
- 4.2.6 The University will make the final decision on a formal appeal within 15 working days of receipt and the applicant will be informed in writing, either by email or by letter, as appropriate.

5. SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN

- 5.1 All applicants of The Robert Gordon University are entitled to pursue a complaint through the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman where the complainant has exhausted the University's internal procedures. Further details of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman can be obtained at: www.spsso.org.uk.

Annex: Schematic Diagram: Appeals Procedures for Applicants

This diagram is for guidance only. Please refer to the Regulation for details.

Applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of an application and seeks feedback in accordance with the *Applicant Feedback Procedure*.

Stage One

Applicant remains dissatisfied following receipt of feedback and seeks a reconsideration of the outcome by submitting an *Admission Appeal Form* normally no later than 10 working days following receipt of feedback.

Head of Student Admissions Service and a representative from the School considers the *Admission Appeal Form* and a response provided to the applicant normally no later than ten working days following receipt of the *Admission Appeal Form*.

Stage Two

If an applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Stage One Appeal then they may choose to continue with the Appeal by submitting the *Admissions Appeal Form – Continuation of Appeal* to the *Head of Student Admissions Service* normally no later than 10 working days following receipt of the outcome of the Stage One Appeal.

A University Admission Appeal Panel will consider any *Admission Appeal Form – Continuation of Appeal*.

The decision of the Panel will be communicated to the applicant within 15 working days of receipt of the *Admission Appeal Form – Continuation of Appeal*

Appeal upheld and
action detailed

Appeal dismissed.
No further action