

## **Discretionary Entrance Regulations, Guidelines and Procedures**

**Applicable to New Zealand citizens and permanent residents who are under 20 years of age and who are not otherwise qualified to enrol for an undergraduate degree qualification**

### **Preamble**

Discretionary Entrance to a New Zealand university is the name given to provisional entrance as specified in Section 257 of the Education Act 1989. The intention of the Discretionary Entrance regulations is to provide a university entrance qualification for those seeking admission having completed Year 12 in a New Zealand secondary school, or equivalent. The requirements for University Entrance are normally met through appropriate performance in a minimum number of approved subjects at Level 3 of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) plus meeting literacy and numeracy requirements. The New Zealand Qualifications Authority determines a list of approved subjects for the purposes of applying the University Entrance standard. Individuals who for any reason have not completed the appropriate requirements for University Entrance, are under the age of 20 years, and are not otherwise academically qualified to enrol for an undergraduate degree qualification at a New Zealand university may be eligible for consideration under Discretionary Entrance.

Discretionary Entrance is applied at the discretion of individual universities and requires a high standard of achievement in Year 12 or its equivalent. This form of entrance is designed to permit admission to a specific qualification.

Prospective applicants should obtain information from the appropriate Liaison, Schools Liaison or Student Recruitment Officer at individual universities, in the first instance.

### **Eligibility to Apply**

1. A person under the age of 20 years who does not meet the University Entrance standard, but
  - (a) is a citizen or permanent resident of New Zealand or Australia\*,
  - (b) has received secondary schooling to at least New Zealand Year 12 level (or its equivalent overseas) and earned at least 14 credits in an approved subject at Level 2 towards NCEA (or its equivalent), and
  - (c) has met the literacy and numeracy standards required for University Entrance, or their equivalents,may apply for Discretionary Entrance.

\* Australian applicants' most recent year of schooling must have been in New Zealand.

Admission will be at the discretion of the university concerned, with the proviso that a student who has undertaken Year 13 study beyond 1 June at a New Zealand secondary school may normally not be admitted under the Discretionary Entrance provisions before July in the following year.<sup>1</sup>

In special circumstances the Chair of Universities New Zealand's Sub-Committee on University Entrance may permit persons who do not fulfil clause (b) or clause (c) above to apply for Discretionary Entrance.

2. A person studying at a New Zealand secondary school, who is attempting to qualify for entrance to university, may apply for Discretionary Entrance in the same year for the purpose of enrolling in papers offered in a summer school by a university. Any person admitted under this regulation who does not, in the following January, meet the University Entrance standard will be required to withdraw from the university and may re-apply for admission at mid-

---

<sup>1</sup> By decision of the Committee of University Academic Programme's (CUAP) Sub-committee on University Entrance this proviso is waived for Year 13 students at a New Zealand secondary school in 2020, due to the impact of COVID-19.

year. Students required to withdraw may complete their summer school programme before doing so, but any papers passed will not be credited to a qualification until a University Entrance qualification is gained.

### **Guidelines for Assessment of Applications**

The following guidelines are designed to assist applicants and their advisers by indicating the requirements that may lead to an application for Discretionary Entrance being successful. The guidelines are based on recent practice and experience and are designed to indicate the standards that should be met for an application to have a reasonable chance of success.

It is essential for applicants to ensure that:

- (a) The application is for entrance to an identified university undergraduate degree.
- (b) The literacy and numeracy standards required for University Entrance, or their equivalents, are achieved.

In addition the following points should guide applicants:

- (c) A close match between the course of study at school and the field of study of the proposed university qualification is helpful.
- (d) In assessing applications, universities will normally expect that an applicant should, by the end of Year 12, have completed four subjects, at Level 2 of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement, each with a minimum of 14 credits and a grade average of 60. The four subjects should include at least three from the approved list and no more than one that may combine credits from no more than two subjects from the approved list, or domains on the National Qualifications Framework.
- (e) Account may be taken of formal and informal learning completed beyond Year 12.

Applicants should note that, notwithstanding these Guidelines, each university will apply its own criteria. There may be additional entry requirements for specific qualifications. Applicants should therefore seek detailed advice from the university to which application will be made.

### **Procedures**

Method of application, closing date, fee

1.
  - (a) Application should be made to a university by the closing date, on that university's application form and accompanied by the required evidence of academic achievements, a statement from an adviser concerning the applicant's suitability for the proposed study, and any required fee. In the case of applicants currently at school in New Zealand the adviser is the principal of the school, or his or her nominee. In any other case the adviser is a university liaison officer or other person appointed by a university as an adviser. Applicants are required to demonstrate that they are New Zealand or Australian citizens or permanent residents. Each university sets its own closing date and fees. Some universities will consider applications made after the closing date.
  - (b) One application per university, for one programme only, may be made. (For exceptions, see clause 2 below.) Applications may be made to more than one university provided the appropriate application fees are paid.
  - (c) Applicants should ensure they also fulfil any separate enrolment procedures required by the universities.

### ***Circumstances in which more than one application is permitted***

2. Where an applicant is applying for a programme to which admission is limited, the applicant may also apply on the same application form for a second programme at the same university.

### ***Assessment of applications by a university***

3. Each university shall designate one or more members of its staff to be responsible for considering applications. The person(s) so designated shall take into account:
  - (a) the academic achievements of the applicant;
  - (b) the programme proposed by the applicant;
  - (c) the statement made by the adviser;
  - (d) any statements made by any other persons consulted by the applicant;
  - (e) any other evidence which may have been provided of the applicant's suitability for Discretionary Entrance.
  - (f) Statements made by the applicant.

#### ***Results of applications***

4. Each university shall advise applicants of the outcome of their applications in time for applicants to complete the necessary enrolment procedures before the start of the appropriate semester, unless circumstances beyond their control make this impossible. Admission to a particular programme does not guarantee admission to specific papers.

#### ***Appeals***

5. A person whose application is declined by a university may appeal to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority,<sup>2</sup> whose decision in the matter is final. The Authority will not consider an appeal based on new or additional documents. Any such documentation should be submitted to the university for a reconsideration of the decision.

#### ***Enrolment in only one programme***

6. A person whose application is approved may enrol only in the programme for which Discretionary Entrance has been awarded, unless a person designated in regulation 3 above approves enrolment in a different programme.

---

<sup>2</sup> Qualifications Evaluation Service, NZQA, PO Box 160, Wellington 6140