

Contextual Offers

University Centre Somerset, part of UCS College Group, is committed to providing equal opportunities for all applicants, as described in our Admissions Policy and our Access and Participation Plan.

As such we seek to recognise an individual's potential to succeed and flourish. In order to do this, we consider qualifications and experience in the context of each applicant's background. We make offers based on evidence that suggests a student's suitability to succeed on their chosen course of study. As such, where appropriate, we will consider making a contextual offer to study with us to recognise life experience and potential as well previous academic achievement.

There are a number of factors which we will consider as contextual data in order to fully understand an applicant's academic potential that academic qualifications alone may not be able to demonstrate. These factors include, but are not limited to:

- The applicant lives in a neighbourhood where the proportion of students going into higher education is low¹.
- The applicant completed their studies at schools/colleges where performance was below average **and** eligibility for Free School Meals was higher than average.
- The applicant is a care leaver
- The applicant is a young Carer
- The applicant is estranged from parents / carers
- The applicant is a mature student (over the age of 21) at application.
- Applicants seeking asylum, have limited leave to remain, are under 'humanitarian protection' or have been granted refugee status with indefinite leave to remain will be eligible to receive a contextual offer without having to meet other indicators. *Please note that this will require supporting evidence of current immigration status with documentation such as a **Biometric Residence Permit, Home Office letters or a solicitor's letter***
- Extenuating circumstances, for example if an applicant has been dealing with illness or bereavement that may have impacted their exam performance.

Applicants who meet one or more of the criteria outlined above **may** be made an offer up to 16 UCAS Tariff points below the standard offer for that Degree Programme (to a minimum of 48 points).

Please note this does not include Top-Up degrees (where the entry requirement is a level 5 qualification so falls outside a UCAS tariff), or Foundation degrees where entry tariff is already set at 48 points.

In some cases, an unconditional offer of study may be made where relevant experience and / or evidence can be produced to underpin an offer (in the case of mature students and extenuating circumstances). Please note however, there are some courses where we cannot take lived experience in lieu of academic entry requirements: E.g. Nursing.

Applicants should apply as normal through UCAS, ensuring that they complete the form accurately and in full. The application will be assessed against the standard entry requirements for the course by our admissions team with contextual offer considerations in mind.

¹ (POLAR 4, quintile 1) **or** an area which has a high level of deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivation, IMD], 0-20%)