

# **European School of Osteopathy**

Admissions Policy and Procedure

2017

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**This policy is applicable from September 2016**

**If required this formal document is available in an alternative format e.g. Braille, tape, disc, email or a larger font size. Please contact the Admissions Team.**

## **Introduction**

The European School of Osteopathy is committed to providing a rewarding Higher Education opportunity and experience to those with the potential to benefit from our offer. We welcome and support applications from all social and educational backgrounds and openly seek to offer opportunities to those with potential, with an aim and commitment to aiding and supporting students to succeed on our programme.

In line with the Quality Assurance Agency's Quality Code, Chapter B2 (2014), the School's policy and procedures for admissions aim to be transparent, clear, fair and consistent in their application.

## **Widening Participation**

The European School of Osteopathy has a firm and passionate belief in encouraging all who have the ability to benefit from higher education to access it with the maximum ease and the greatest flexibility. We aim to select as participants those who will benefit the most from working with us. These will include those from under-represented groups, those looking for second career opportunities, those already in work, and those looking to develop themselves later in life. Supporting learners to achieve their potential goes to the heart of our mission and is reflected in all aspects of promotion, recruitment, admissions, course delivery and support and progression to further study or employment.

## **Equality and diversity**

Consistent with its Equality and Disability statement the School is committed to providing fair, transparent and consistent practice. We work to create and maintain an inclusive environment where everyone can be themselves and achieve their full potential. We pride ourselves in celebrating diversity and promoting equality of opportunity.

## **Disability**

Disabled applicants are welcomed by the ESO and are encouraged to disclose the nature of their disability in their applications. This enables the Student Welfare Officer and the school

to be pro-active in discussion and provision of reasonable adjustments, so enhancing student study and experience, whilst complying with current government legislation.

When the ESO considers an applicant's suitability, it has to be confident that the individual is likely to have the capacity and capability to meet all the demands of professional practice at the end of their programme of study. Once registered, osteopaths have a professional obligation to decide for themselves whether they continue to remain fit to practise. Self-monitoring is therefore an important part of being a registered health professional.

The General Osteopathic Council publishes very useful guidance for applicants with a disability or health impairment .

Where an applicant has specific needs, which may influence their ability to study on the programme, these will be considered separately from the main selection process. All applicants should consider that to train to be an osteopath is physically demanding.

The School is responsible for the student's welfare during their studies and it needs to identify early any medical condition or otherwise that may lead to injury from any osteopathic techniques that students may practise on each other. For this reason, immediately prior to starting on the programme, enrolled students are required to complete a health questionnaire, so that any personal risk can be identified, and support or adjustments put in place where necessary. The information disclosed will remain confidential. Only if it is considered appropriate, will the Student Welfare Officer ask the student to consent to pass the information on to relevant staff or faculty. The support and advice is maintained throughout the duration of the student's time on the programme.

It is essential that students are also fit for clinical practice. In rare circumstances they may be required to provide evidence of this (such as a report from their medical practitioner). Students who are experiencing health-related difficulties will be given appropriate support.

Any offer made is on the basis that any special need can reasonably be accommodated.

## **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check**

Osteopathy is one of the health professions regulated by law in the UK. As part of your offer, you will need to demonstrate evidence of your good character. The School will therefore need to verify whether you have a criminal record and, if you do, to determine whether this will prevent you from starting the course. You will also be required to disclose any material facts that may be relevant to your good character such as criminal and civil legal proceedings.

Applicants with a criminal record should disclose this at application stage on their UCAS form by ticking the relevant box.

All offers made are conditional upon a satisfactory DBS check and this is undertaken during the first week of the course. Applicants are advised to read the DBS Policy: <http://www.eso.ac.uk/policies.html>. Overseas students or those who have lived outside of the UK for in excess of 1 year will be required to provide a Certificate of Good Conduct (or equivalent).

If an applicant omitted to disclose their Criminal record on their UCAS form, they should write (in confidence), explaining the circumstances, to the Academic Registrar as soon as possible who will then review the case.

It should be noted that the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) does not apply to osteopathy, given the nature of the programme of study and so previous convictions are never spent. Applicants must also disclose any police cautions and any matter for which at present they are subject to police investigation.

Further information on the DBS is available at: [www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview](http://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview).

## Osteopathic Practice Standards

The offer of a place on the osteopathy programme implies subsequent application for registration as an osteopath once graduated, thereby joining the osteopathic profession. All applicants must therefore have the potential to meet the requirements of an osteopath as defined by the General Osteopathic Council's (GOsC) Osteopathic Practice Standards: <http://www.osteopathy.org.uk/standards/osteopathic-practice/>.

The General Osteopathic Council has produced 'Guidance for Osteopathic Pre-registration Education' and prospective students should familiarize themselves with its content: [http://www.osteopathy.org.uk/training-and-registration/becoming-an-osteopath/guidance-](http://www.osteopathy.org.uk/training-and-registration/becoming-an-osteopath/guidance-osteopathic-pre-registration-education/)

[osteopathic-pre-registration-education/](http://www.osteopathy.org.uk/training-and-registration/becoming-an-osteopath/guidance-osteopathic-pre-registration-education/).

The responsibility for decisions regarding registration once the osteopathy programme has been successfully completed is however that of the General Osteopathic Council, where evidence of good character and health is considered as part of the process of application to the General Osteopathic Council.

## **Fitness to Practice**

The ESO has its own Student Fitness to Practise Policy, which is based on General Osteopathic Council guidance. Successful applicants are advised to review the policy prior to accepting the offer or registering on the programme: <http://www.eso.ac.uk/policies.html>.

The ESO must check whether students applying to enter the M.Ost programme have previously been subject to any student fitness to practise or any other disciplinary proceedings from other educational institutions, regulators or professional bodies. Any previous history of such proceedings may be investigated and may affect a decision to offer a place. For this reason, all applicants, other than those applying directly from secondary/high school, will be required to confirm whether or not this is the case and sign a confirmatory declaration.

## **Admission of under 18s**

The school welcomes applications from people of all ages. However, we have a duty of care towards all our students, employees and visitors and in the case of students joining before their 18th birthday this duty is enhanced as such students are regarded as children under UK law. The ESO, in admitting students under the age of 18, must ensure that all appropriate legal obligations are recognised and discharged. Students that will be enrolling before their 18th birthday will be required to provide proof of parental or guardian approval through completion of the relevant form. Please see the ESO's Child Protection Policy for details: <http://www.eso.ac.uk/policies.html>.

Each applicant will therefore be assessed on his or her merits in the light of available information.

## **Criteria for admission**

The ESO seeks to admit applicants it believes have the potential to succeed. Underlying this strong belief are five factors we feel are key to indicating the likely success of a student:

- ability to think and learn;
- a foundation of knowledge and skills from which to extend their study;
- motivation to study osteopathy and awareness of the career;
- caring ethos and a sense of social awareness;

- sense of personal responsibility.

All applicants are expected to have an appreciation of the length of the training programme and its inherently practical and theoretical nature, together with the career structure, and how this relates to their personal circumstances.

These factors, alongside formal qualifications, will be assessed through a student's personal statement at interview and based on the reference, which must be provided on the UCAS application. The aim of the interview is to explore the non-academic criteria (see above) and to encourage applicants to talk naturally about themselves, their studies, their experiences and motivations, and to demonstrate that they have the interpersonal skills to be able to communicate effectively. In this way they can show how they have the foundations of the academic and non-academic attributes required of a prospective osteopath.

Interviewers assess each applicant's performance and determine an overall recommendation. Interviews normally last 20 minutes.

All entry criteria are approved by the Academic Board. Any academic decision made by the Admissions Team is therefore made in accordance with these criteria.

In terms of formal qualifications, UK school leaver applicants are required to have achieved a minimum of grade C in both English and Mathematics at GCSE level, or equivalent. Offers are rarely made in UCAS Tariff points, instead offers are made against the subjects the applicant is working towards. Entry requirements can be viewed in our prospectus and can also be viewed against the course Entry Profiles on the UCAS website: [www.ucas.com/students/coursesearch](http://www.ucas.com/students/coursesearch) and on our website: <https://www.eso.ac.uk/entry-requirements-2017-entry>.

Offers will only be made in Tariff points when students are studying a broader range of subjects and offers will always require an applicant to have studied science/sports or health based subjects to an acceptable level (minimum Level 3 or equivalent). In these cases the minimum UCAS Tariff point requirement will normally be a score of 120.

## **Mature Students**

Applications from mature applicants (over 21), without the above qualifications, but who are able to demonstrate relevant experience and achievement, will be given consideration. If an applicant has studied at higher level previously and is not able to demonstrate a good understanding of science based subjects, they may qualify for entry via the ESO in-house Summer Science Course, details of which are available from the Admissions Team.

## EU and International Students

The ESO has a large intake from overseas. The ESO Admissions Team is usually able to establish the UK equivalent of an overseas qualification. Where necessary, applicants might be asked to provide a translation of their qualifications and establish the UK equivalent level through UK NARIC: <http://ecctis.co.uk/naric/>.

The ESO website shows a range of acceptable overseas qualifications and their minimum grade requirement: <https://www.eso.ac.uk/entry-requirements-2017-entry> (select the EU or International student tab).

If an applicant's qualification is not listed on the website, they should contact the Admissions Team for an informal assessment of their eligibility to apply.

## English Language requirement

International, and EU applicants for whom English is not a first language, and who are seeking to join our programme are expected to hold an IELTS certificate, with an overall score of 6.5, or an equivalent qualification.

International, non EU students, should refer to the ESO International Student Guide for further information about applying to the ESO: <http://www.eso.ac.uk/policies.html>.

If an overseas applicant who does not have a formal English qualification feels that their English is at an appropriate level to apply, they may do so. In these cases the Admissions Team will use the applicant's personal statement and their interview performance to make an assessment of their level of English. The applicant must be confident that they are able to participate in an interview without any difficulty. If, following the interview, the Admissions Team feel that their English is not of sufficient standard, the applicant will be required to gain the IELTS at level 6.5 (or equivalent) before the osteopathy programme starts but no later than 31 August in the year they wish to join.

## Applications

### How to apply

All applications should be made online via the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS): [www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk).



## **How decisions are made**

Decisions are made by the school's Admissions Team. This team is highly experienced and qualified to make these decisions, delivering a fair and consistent admissions service.

Successful applicants must attend an interview after they have applied. This is the final part of the selection process. Interview dates can be flexible where necessary. Applicants who have not already attended an Open Day are encouraged to arrange an interview on the same day as an Open Day, so they can make an informed decision when accepting an offer. The Admissions Team will contact applicants to discuss interview arrangements within 2 weeks of receipt of application. Interviews are by prior invitation only and it is not possible to organise an interview without having first applied through UCAS.

In some cases, where the Admissions Team may need to seek further advice, appropriate members of the Academic Board may be consulted on an admissions decision. Such occasions may be, but not limited to when an applicant possesses non-standard qualifications.

Should any information be unclear on completed application forms, the Admissions Team will seek clarification directly from the applicant. This will, naturally, delay a final decision being transmitted to UCAS.

For standard entry level qualifications (e.g. GCE A levels and BTEC Nationals), offers will usually specify the grade requirement in the qualification the applicant is undertaking. For applicants taking non-standard qualifications, offers will be expressed in a way appropriate to the respective qualifications.

Applicants will receive decisions, and subsequent communications regarding these, directly from UCAS and the progress of applications can be monitored electronically by applicants using TRACK, the UCAS on-line application tracking service.

Successful applicants will also receive a formal offer letter from the ESO, along with a comprehensive guide to joining the School.

## **Late applications**

The School accepts applications up to, and including, the official UCAS deadline of 15th January each year. Applicants are invited to apply for entry beyond this date, up to, and including, the final UCAS deadline of 30th June. For applicants wishing to apply late, however, this invitation carries a caveat that the course may be full. Applicants are therefore advised to submit their applications to UCAS before the 15th January deadline. Applications are considered in receipt order.

## **Deferred applications**

The School welcomes applicants who decide to take a year out between school/college and recognises that this can be of benefit to the maturity and motivation of students concerned. However, it should be noted that offer conditions must be met in the year that they are set. It is only possible to defer entry if an offer is, or becomes, unconditional.

## **Feedback to applicants**

Applicants wishing to obtain feedback on decisions made in respect of their applications, should contact the Admissions Team in the first instance by emailing: [admissions@eso.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@eso.ac.uk).

## **Appeals against admissions decisions**

The School will accept an appeal against an admission decision only when an applicant is able to provide evidence that prejudice or bias, in relation to equality and diversity issues, has influenced an outcome, or where evidence can be provided that procedural irregularities or administrative error have occurred. Appeals will not be accepted against an academic judgment.

Requests for appeals should be directed, in writing, to the Admissions Department, within 10 working days of confirmation of the application decision. Evidence supporting the grounds for an appeal should be provided, in order that a decision may be reviewed. The review of a decision does not guarantee its amendment and the School reserves the right to uphold an original admission decision.

Responsibility for communicating in writing, the result of an appeal lies with the Admissions Officer.

## **Complaints regarding the admissions service**

Complaints should be made in writing within 10 working days of confirmation of the application decision and may be made in relation to the level of service received in the following areas:

- the behaviour of an employee of the School during the application process;
- the level of feedback provided by the Admissions Team, upon request by the applicant;
- the way in which an application was handled.

Complaints should be directed to the Vice Principal. The review of a case does not guarantee an amendment and the School reserves the right to uphold an original admission decision.

Responsibility for communicating, in writing, the result of such a complaint lies with the Academic Registrar.

## **Extenuating circumstances**

In the event that an applicant believes they have extenuating circumstances which may result in lower than expected attainment in examinations, preventing them from meeting the conditions of their offer, a letter of explanation should be sent to the School's Admissions Team. This will be kept against the applicant's record and given consideration, alongside their results, during the Confirmation Period.

Letters of explanation should be accompanied by evidence from an appropriate person, qualified and able to confirm the extenuating circumstances. As an example, such persons may be defined as doctors or teachers. Submission of extenuating circumstances does not guarantee admission.

Any applications found to be fraudulent through the UCAS Similarity Detection Service, or found to be fraudulently claiming extenuating circumstances, will be rejected by the School.

## **Admission with credit**

The School operates processes to recognise applicants' prior certified learning, which are aligned to sector practice. Credits accumulated from a programme at another educational institution may, where appropriate, allow applicants to transfer credits towards the M.Ost programme at the ESO.

Applicants seeking to transfer their credits should contact the Admissions Team for advice.

## **Confirmation of results**

Where an offer is conditional, the confirmation of offers occurs when exam results are received by the Admissions Team.

The process involves the comparison of achieved results against the original offer made by the School. If academic conditions, alongside any non-academic conditions, are met, the School is able to 'confirm' places to applicants. Once offers are confirmed, applicants' offer status will move from CF (conditional firm), to UF (unconditional firm) and applicants will be able to view this change via the TRACK, UCAS' on-line application tracking service for applicants.

Results are compared with offers, on an individual basis. It is at this point that the nature and potential impact of any individual extenuating circumstances is also considered.

Confirmation of results occurs electronically, in conjunction with other external electronic systems. The School reserves the right to amend any confirmation decisions made as a result of electronic system errors.

## Clearing

'University Clearing' occurs from the publication date of 'A' level results to the end of September each year and is the period during which providers advertise any vacancies they still have available on specific courses. Applicants who have failed to have their offers of a place confirmed and are not holding offers at any university are eligible to apply through the clearing process.

When seeking a place via this route, applicants should note that places may be limited. Applicants in Clearing should first telephone the ESO for an informal assessment of their suitability for the programme. They will need to provide details of their grades attained and demonstrate why they think that osteopathy is a good alternative to the course they originally applied for. Applicants should be prepared to attend an interview at very short notice.

Vacancies will be advertised on the UCAS website: [www.ucas.com/clearing](http://www.ucas.com/clearing) and in the national press.

## Disclosure

It is the responsibility of all applicants to supply accurate information at the time of their application and to disclose anything which may influence an admission decision. Failure to disclose information which would have been influential in the decision making process, may lead to an offer being retracted.

## Data protection

All information held by the School will be treated in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act, 1998, and applications will not be discussed with third parties, unless authorisation has been granted by applicants. Applicants have a right to access personal data held about them by the School by making a 'Data Subject Access Request' and the ESO will respond within 40 days. Further information on data protection can be found on the government website below:

[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1998/ukpga\\_19980029\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1998/ukpga_19980029_en_1).

## Freedom of information

The School will respond to written requests for information, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, 2000, within 20 working days. For further information, refer to: <http://ico.org.uk/>.

## **Employee development**

The School is committed to the training and continuing development of its employees. Employees are encouraged and supported in all areas of learning, both in relation to their development in their respective professional roles and in their individual areas of personal interest. The School aims to consistently monitor and update its training methods and procedures to ensure that all employees involved in the School's admissions process deliver a professional and fair service.

## **Monitoring and review**

The School's Admissions Policy is reviewed annually by the Academic Board in order to ensure that it continues to meet stakeholder, national and institutional requirements and best practice.

The ESO aims to monitor its processes and practices with regards to Admissions. This ensures that it remains aware of changes in practice and policy within the sector and is able to provide adequate training for employees and the best possible service to its applicants.

## **Course changes or cancellations**

Occasionally it may be necessary to make changes to a programme between the offer of a place and enrolment. If this occurs, the School will ensure that prospective students are informed at the earliest opportunity and will be advised of all options open to them.

## **Disclaimer**

The School reserves the right to alter the content of its Integrated Masters in Osteopathy programme at any time prior to applicants' admission. In accordance with such actions, the ESO will provide a suitable rationale for the changes or permit the withdrawal of applications by applicants without incurring the payment of fees.