

GRADUATE SCHOOL: ADMISSIONS POLICIES AND PROCESSES

ENQUIRIES BEFORE APPLICATION

- 1 Where generic email addresses are used by academic schools, there should still be named admissions tutors on the admissions page for each school, even if personal email addresses aren't given.
- 2 All communication from colleagues to enquirers should have the admissions tutor copied in.
- 3 All enquiries should be responded to within five days (even if that is just a holding email).
- 4 If academic colleagues receive a research proposal directly (i.e. prior to formal application), they should provide feedback to the prospective applicant within a reasonable amount of time (maximum 2 weeks). Colleagues should not 'approve' or commit to supervising any proposal, just advise the enquirer that they are potentially interested in their proposal and encourage them to submit a formal application when ready.
- 5 Working with potential applicants on draft research proposals which are deemed promising and which could be supervised at the University is mandatory. If colleagues are reluctant to do this, then they will not be included in supervisory teams.
- 6 All schools will have a Sharepoint site accessible to colleagues within their school that includes:
 - Email templates for staff to respond to enquiries from prospective applicants (one for an enquiry with a proposal, one for without a proposal), with the instruction that the admissions tutor is copied in to all such correspondence.
 - A spreadsheet that details enquiries received, who responded to them and when they were responded to.
 - A spreadsheet including all colleagues and their research interests to be used in advising on potential supervisors and in putting together supervisory teams.

APPLICATIONS

- 1 The University commitment is that applicants will normally have a decision on their application a maximum of 8 weeks after its submission.
- 2 The maximum time during which an application will be at any stage will be as follows:
Stage 1: 1 week (7 days); Stage 2: 1 week (7 days); Stage 3: 1 month (30 days).¹

¹ The stages used in admissions statistics are:

Stage 1: New application

Stage 2: Awaiting action from Admissions

Stage 3: Awaiting action from academic school

- 3 No applications will be processed without the applicant indicating on it the member of the academic staff who has previously been consulted.
- 4 Applications can be forwarded by Admissions to admissions tutors as long as there is a completed application and a research proposal.
- 5 Admissions can wait up to the point of the interview for other documents. If they have not been received by then, the application will be rejected.
- 6 Admissions tutors are able to reject applications without consulting colleagues.
- 7 Applications should be sent by admissions tutors to potential DoSs, not to research leads.
- 8 A deadline should always be given when sending applications to colleagues for consideration. The suggested deadline is 5 working days.
- 9 An admissions spreadsheet should be kept by admissions tutors on Sharepoint and kept up to date – including information on where an application has got to, which colleagues have been approached, whether a draft proposal has been worked on, etc.
- 10 Heads of School/Assistant Heads of School should be informed as soon as an interview is arranged. This will ensure that there is plenty of notice about proposed supervisory arrangements. As the proposed DoS should be at the interview, the provisional plan for the team should be in place before the interview.
- 11 Interviews should always be carried out by at least two people and must always include an independent chair (i.e. someone who is not on the proposed supervisory team) and the proposed DoS.
- 12 Prospective DoSs are required to regularly engage with their prospective students between offer and enrolment.

REPORTING

In order to ensure that the above processes and policies are followed and to track their effects, the following reporting procedures are in place:

- 1 An Admissions report on turnaround times for stages 1-4 will go to RDPC each month.
- 2 The applications spreadsheets kept by admissions tutors will be presented at RDPC each month.
- 3 Meetings between Course Enquiries and the Graduate School will happen every 6 months.
- 4 Admissions will prepare key data to be reviewed by GSB at the end of each admissions cycle (for both September and January cycles) showing comparative performance against previous years.
- 5 Data from schools and from Admissions on enquiries and admissions processes will be included in the documents to be reviewed as part of the GS annual monitoring and evaluation process.