

# Admissions Policy

## Introduction

This policy applies for all applications to all courses at the National Film and Television School (“NFTS”). It outlines the commitments made by the School in ensuring that its admissions procedures are fair, transparent and equitable.

The admission of each student shall be based on the expectation that the student is able to fulfil the course objectives and achieve the standards required.

For applicants to the School’s MA courses, the standard of the degree is that expected of a candidate who has successfully achieved a level of knowledge and skills which have provided an appropriate foundation for more advanced and intensive study than previously, and which includes an element of advanced independent work.

All applicants must be able to demonstrate knowledge of practical skills and theory in their chosen specialisation. Applicants should normally have an undergraduate degree or equivalency, such as an alternative, relevant professional qualification or relevant industrial or practical experience.

The NFTS is committed to equity of treatment for all of its applicants, and applications are considered on their individual merits. Admission to a course offered by the NFTS is based solely on information provided to the School during the application process.

In addition to its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010, the NFTS is committed to the recruitment of students with the greatest ability and potential, irrespective of their social, cultural and economic background.

## Roles and Responsibilities

A Selection Panel for each course comprising the Head of Department, other NFTS tutors and/or industry professionals assess all applications. In order to ensure fairness and equity during the selection process guidance is provided to Head of Departments in compiling and briefing their selection committee.

The minimum composition of a Selection Panel is one member, which is the Head of Department or Course Leader.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Department or Course Leader to ensure that the rights and responsibilities of the selection process are known to each member of the Selection Panel. The Head of Department or Course Leader shall have the final say in the selection of candidates to be recommended to the Director of School for the offer of a place. The Director of School is required to approve all offer selection results.

## Entry Criteria

The NFTS publishes the entry requirements on its website.

The NFTS aims to ensure that its published information is accurate, clear and unambiguous, and is published within a timeframe to enable applicants to make a considered decision on whether to apply to study on a course offered by the School. The School commits to complying with the Competition and Markets Authority advice on Consumer Law for UK Higher Education providers. As such, the School commits to avoiding altering admissions criteria during the course of the admissions cycle.

The published entry requirements reflect a typical offer; however, meeting or being predicted to meet these requirements does not guarantee an offer.

Applicants considering MA courses are expected to have obtained an undergraduate degree at the point of enrolment on to the course at the NFTS or alternatively relevant, equivalent professional practice. The School recognises as an equivalent qualification any degree, diploma, certificate or other evidence of formal qualification awarded by a university or other higher education establishment, where the award is made following the successful completion of a programme of at least three year's study, the programme of study being open as a general rule, only to persons holding a certificate awarded on the successful completion of a full course of upper secondary education.

### **Subject Specific Requirements**

Subject specific requirements for each course are clearly listed on the NFTS website.

### **English Language Requirements**

All applicants must be fluent in written and spoken English and their command of English is assessed at interview stage.

Students requiring a visa to study in the UK are subject to Home Office requirements in relation to English language qualifications. Where these differ from NFTS requirements, applicants will be required to satisfy both UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and NFTS requirements before being admitted to a course at the NFTS.

NFTS will accept the IELTS for UKVI exam score of at least 6.5 in every category.

### **Application Assessment**

The NFTS considers all aspects of each application in coming to a decision on whether to offer the student a place on one of its programmes. This may include performance at interview and/or Selection Workshop, any relevant work experience as well as a demonstrable commitment to the subject applied for.

The NFTS may require applicants to submit a portfolio or additional materials for consideration as part of the selection process, in addition to their application forms. For programmes where this is a requirement, it will be clearly indicated on NFTS website.

### **Application Procedure**

Applications to all courses must be submitted via the NFTS website.

Applicants are only permitted to register once on the NFTS website portal, but may apply to more than one course.

The NFTS normally permits applications to be submitted no earlier than 6 months preceding the intended admission date the following year. The School will publish annually dates (“the application deadline date”) by which applications and supporting materials should be submitted in order to ensure their consideration for that year; the School reserves the right, following that date, to consider individual courses full, or to continue to accept applications, up until the first day of term. Applications received by the application deadline date will be considered equally; applications submitted after that time will be considered on an individual basis. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that their application is submitted in time to make the necessary arrangements to study at the School, including completion of all steps to ensure that the student has obtained a valid visa prior to the start of the programme.

Applicants should be aware that, in addition to general application deadlines, there may be additional funding deadlines for both NFTS and external grants, scholarships and other funding options.

Individual courses may require applicants to submit a digital portfolio of their work. Hard copy portfolios will be accepted only for MA Production Design course and will be returned to the applicant, at the applicant’s expense. Guidance on the expected content of each portfolio will be published on the NFTS website.

Successful applicants will be made a conditional offer, and the conditions will be spelled out clearly in the offer letter. Each condition must be met prior to the date of registration in order to receive an unconditional offer; where any condition of the offer is not met prior to the date of registration then the offer will normally be considered withdrawn. In such circumstances the applicant will need to re-apply in order to be considered for a future place on the programme.

NFTS does not usually allow applicants to defer entry for any of its courses.

Applicants should be aware that, under the Data Protection legislation, the NFTS is only able to speak directly with them unless the School has been provided with verifiable, written permission from the applicant that they give permission for the School to speak to a representative.

## **Interviews**

The NFTS courses may use interviews as part of the selection process for its courses. The interview shall normally be conducted in person with the Selection Panel. Video conferencing or Skype interviews are permissible at the discretion of the Chair of the Selection Panel. Any recommendation to offer a place may only be made by a properly constituted Selection Panel, after having reviewed application forms, interview records and the applicant portfolio.

Invitations to interview shall make clear that the applicant is invited to attend a formal interview as part of the selection process.

Clear information shall be sent to each applicant in advance of the interview and in sufficient time for any travel arrangements to be made and for the interviewee to prepare. This information shall include:

- The date, time, duration and location of the interview and a contact name and number in case of queries on the day;
- Details of any documentation which should be brought to the interview, including verification of the applicant's identity;
- A specific date by which they must respond to confirm their attendance;
- A brief outline of what to expect at the interview, including the format of the interview and any test that may be included as part of the process;

Applicants shall not be accompanied, supported or coached by individuals external to the School in interviews other than as a reasonable adjustment in the case of a disability. In such cases, this adjustment must be approved in advance by the Chair of Selection Panel.

### **Selection Workshops**

As a part of the admissions selection process, successful interview applicants are required to attend a Selection Workshop for some MA courses.

The workshop is full-time and it will allow the applicant to experience the NFTS environment and working methods. It will also give us the opportunity to see potential students in action and enable us to determine the final selection of students to join the MA course in January. The workshop is designed to be of benefit to all participants, irrespective of whether they are eventually offered a place on the course.

### **Offers**

The final offer of places on the course depends on a number of criteria. There must be clear evidence of maturity, potential and commitment to the medium. A basic understanding and initial knowledge of the skills that are required in the chosen specialisation is fundamental. The evidence of aptitude shown in the application material and the performance at interview are also taken into consideration. The ability and appetite to collaborate positively with others rates highly on the selection criteria.

In most areas we would normally expect to establish a reserve list beyond those initially offered places. This ensures that the available places are filled even if some of our first choices are unable to accept the offer.

In the event of the Selection Panel wishing to offer a place to a candidate who does not have an undergraduate degree, the application, with supporting evidence of suitability for the course based on assessment during the selection process, is passed to the Chair of the Assessment and Concessions Committee for consideration. If the Chair of the Assessment and Concessions Committee feels there is sufficient evidence to warrant a concession being made for this applicant, then the candidate will be offered a place.

### **Fraud and Plagiarism**

It is essential that the portfolio or other material submitted as part of an application are the work of the applicant. The School reserves the right to use similarity detection software to evaluate the originality of a piece of work.

Any irregularities in the application form or other written materials will be investigated by the Selection Panel. The applicant shall be contacted and notified of the evidence to be considered as part of this investigation, and given the chance to make representations. Where an application is rejected on other grounds, no further action will be taken with regard to any suspected plagiarism or fraud.

The NFTS reserves the right to reject any application, or withdraw an offer, where any part of the application is identified as having been plagiarised or is otherwise fraudulent.

The NFTS reserves the right to withdraw any offer that it issues in error. In such circumstances it will write to the applicant to apologise formally and explain the nature of the error.

### **Disclosure of Criminal Convictions**

The NFTS recognises its duty to protect the School community and the communities around it, and that information regarding an individual's criminal convictions may need to be taken into account when deciding whether that individual may begin or continue their studies. The application process requires applicants to disclose relevant unspent convictions.

A 'relevant' criminal conviction is one which may have implications for the HE provider's duty of care towards the safety of their students, staff, and visitors. This includes convictions concerning violence, sexual offences, supply of drugs, as well as offences involving firearms, arson, and terrorism.

Applicants with declared criminal convictions are initially assessed on standard selection criteria. If it is recommended that an offer be made, further investigation of the relevance of the criminal conviction(s) will be carried out before the final decision is made to determine, based on evidence, whether an applicant poses an unacceptable risk to the School or the School community. This risk will be assessed by a panel chaired by the Registrar and comprising of at least two Heads of Department, one of whom shall be the Head of Department for the course to which the application relates, and other appropriate staff depending on the nature of the conviction.

### **Extenuating Circumstances**

The NFTS understands circumstances beyond an applicant's control, such as illness or bereavement, may detrimentally affect their academic progress. In such instances, and for entry to NFTS course, the School expects applicants to have taken appropriate action to ensure the relevant examination bodies have allowed for such circumstances prior to the announcement of results or following an appeal.

### **Disabled Applicants**

The NFTS is committed to fulfilling its obligations in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Applications from disabled applicants will be considered upon their merit and potential for their chosen programme. Any support needs or required adjustments shall be considered independently of the admissions decision. Where an applicant believes that their disability has impacted detrimentally upon their academic performance to date, they should provide details in their application. Student Support may provide applicants with information, advice and guidance on disability support available during the admissions process and after registration.

The NFTS is committed to ensuring fair treatment of all applicants, including disabled applicants. The School shall make reasonable adjustments during the application to ensure that disabled applicants are treated no less favourably than other applicants, in consultation with the applicant. In the event that there is disagreement between an applicant and the NFTS on the nature of a specific adjustment, a final decision shall be made by the Registrar.

### **Age Requirement**

The NFTS does not operate a minimum or maximum age requirement for its courses; however, students must be able to demonstrate the maturity and personal skills, as well as the academic potential required to succeed on a postgraduate higher education course.

### **Feedback on Unsuccessful Applications**

The NFTS receives high numbers of applications to its courses. The School does not normally provide feedback to applicants whose applications are rejected prior to interview. Feedback on applications rejected following interview may be provided at the discretion of the Head of Department. Any such request should be submitted to the Registry in writing.

### **Fraudulent Applications**

If false information has been given on an application regarding qualifications or experience, or the provision of fake certificates or reference to support an application, or the deliberate omission of relevant information e.g. the non—disclosure of a relevant unspent criminal conviction, the application will be deemed to be fraudulent. The School reserves the right to terminate a student's registration if at any time he/she is found to have submitted a fraudulent application to the School.

### **Appeals**

Because of the level of competition for places, there will inevitably be occasions when an applicant disagrees with a selection decision. Providing that the decision can be shown to have been reached fairly and in accordance with the published selection criteria, the original decision will not be overturned. However, should an applicant wish to challenge a decision made on their application, this may be done on one of the following grounds:

- Extenuating circumstances have not been taken into account;

- the School has made an administrative error;
- the provisions of this Policy have not been followed.

**Appeals against the academic judgement of the School will not be considered.**

Issues about admissions decisions should be raised informally with a member of Registry staff in the first instance. If an applicant remains dissatisfied, an appeal must be submitted via email to the Registrar within 28 days of notification of the decision to reject the application. Appeals must outline the basis of the appeal, with evidence as appropriate. The Registrar may then investigate the decision to reject the application.

Following any such investigation, which will usually be completed within 28 days of receipt of the appeal, the Registrar shall then either:

- Reject the appeal;
- Refer the application back to the Head of Department for re-consideration, with guidance;

The Registrar's decision shall be final.

**Complaints**

If an applicant is dissatisfied with any aspect of the School's service in respect of the admissions process, this should be raised informally with a member of Registry staff in the first instance. If an applicant remains dissatisfied, a formal complaint may be submitted by email to the Registrar within 28 days of the incident that is the cause of the complaint. The complaint must clearly outline the reason for the complaint, with evidence if appropriate, and the form of resolution or redress that the applicant is seeking. The Registrar will investigate the complaint and will reply formally to it usually within 28 days of receipt.

The decision of the Registrar shall be final.

**Approved July 2018**