



EDUCATION MANUAL

D: Learner Support

Chapter: D: LEARNER SUPPORT

Section: D4: Admissions

Classification: Policy and Procedures

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D4.1c SVM BVSci Admissions Policy

1. Overall Aim of Policy

The School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM) Admissions Policy is designed to ensure that those offered a place at SRUC SVM on the BVSci programme have a realistic chance of success and have equal opportunity at application stage to demonstrate potential. It aims to provide transparency in SRUC SVM's admissions process and decision making.

Through its admissions procedures, SVM seeks to identify those applicants who will benefit from, and can be reasonably expected to achieve, the BVSci award and become members of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS). It recognises that this cannot necessarily be judged from academic performance alone and consideration will therefore be given to an applicant's life experiences, demonstrated aptitude for the chosen course, aspirations and related skills.

SRUC aims to provide an enabling and safe environment for students to achieve their academic potential and SVM's Admissions processes are designed to ensure an appropriate means by which the SRUC community is protected.

The Policy, together with any supporting guidance, complies with the Universities UK/Guild HE Code of Practice, QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education, UCAS operating requirements and other awarding bodies' regulations. SRUC's policies for Contextual Admissions, Equality, Inclusion and Taught Tuition Fees also apply. The Higher Education sector good practice identified by the Supporting Professionalism in Admissions (SPA) initiative and Advance HE (previously Equality Challenge Unit) has also been incorporated.

SRUC welcomes, values and seeks a diverse student body and proactively supports applications from Scottish and Rest of the UK students. SRUC welcomes applications from underrepresented groups. It is an active member of Scotland's Schools into Higher Education Programme (SHEP) and other Scottish widening access initiatives.

2. Scope of Policy

This Policy is concerned with the admission to SVM's BVSci programme. Application is made through UCAS with supplementary submissions directly to SRUC through an online form and applies to all applicants.

3. Management of Admissions

The SRUC Admissions service is managed by Registry. For admissions purposes, the Registrar is the designated Head of Admissions and is accountable to the Provost for decisions taken. The routine decision making, and administration of the admissions process is undertaken by the Admissions Team led by the Admissions Lead.

The UCAS service is used for all applications to SRUC's full-time Higher Education (HE) undergraduate programmes. Applicants can submit applications to UCAS from the beginning of September in the year preceding entry. UCAS deadlines and procedures are adhered to and incorporated into SRUC's operating processes.

3.1 Entry Requirements

Admissions criteria are publicly accessible from the SVM website (<http://www.sruc.ac.uk/vetschool>) and the SRUC website (<http://www.sruc.ac.uk/courses>), the relevant prospectus and for undergraduate admissions on the UCAS website: www.ucas.com. This includes information relating to English language requirements for those applicants whose first language is not English. Information provided is accurate at the time of issue and aims to provide applicants with the details they require to make an informed decision about their future study choices.

SRUC considers a wide range of qualifications for entry purposes.

In addition to academic qualifications, all applicants must provide a personal statement including information on their academic background and general interests, as well as motivation for their chosen subject. A reference must be included as part of the UCAS application process.

Three supplementary documents must be submitted to SRUC directly alongside the UCAS application. Each applicant must complete a [Vocational Experience Summary Form](#) (VEF detailing recent and relevant experience which demonstrates the key skills needed for a veterinary student. These will include direct experience with different animals and management systems but also public facing roles which demonstrate good communication skills such as jobs in the hospitality industry or paid or voluntary work.

The second document required is a letter to the Head of School (HoS) detailing the applicant's experiences of, and contributions to, communities, in particular those of a rural or remote nature. Knowledge of Scotland's rural economy and its importance in the remote and rural sector should also be demonstrated. Applicants should include details of their thoughts on how the veterinary profession can help support rural communities and businesses.

The final piece of supplementary evidence we are requesting is a personal reference, preferably from someone within the veterinary or related professions. This is separate to the UCAS reference and should include the referee's opinion of the candidate's suitability for veterinary medicine and describe how the candidate aligns with the School's mission.

Details on how to complete these documents and what to include will be provided on the SRUC SVM website.

Applicants who do not meet the minimum academic criteria but who have significant and relevant experience in their chosen subject may be considered for the offer of a place.

Applicants may be offered an alternative programme of study if they do not meet the minimum entry requirements for the chosen programme.

Applicants who do not meet the minimum academic criteria but who fall under one or more contextual indicators may be considered for the offer of a place. (Further details are available in SRUC's Contextual Admissions Policy and on the SVM website).

SRUC has standard minimum entry qualifications (both in terms of achievement and subject area). These are approved by the Academic Board and published for guidance purposes. Subject specific requirements are confirmed at the validation of the programme.

3.2 Decision Making

SRUC reserves the right to request grades higher than the published standard minimum requirements to assist its selection processes.

Application decisions will be made by appropriately qualified staff, including members of the Admissions Team, designated academic staff and trained professional partners.

Applications presenting alternative qualifications and/or experiential learning will be considered by designated academic staff as appropriate.

Decisions for all full-time Degree applications are transmitted to the applicant via UCAS.

Operating processes for the consideration of all types of applications are in place.

3.3 Interviews

Interviews will be used to inform academic selection for the BVSci. Please contact the Admissions Team at SVMadmissions@sruc.ac.uk for further details.

The interview is a two-way process between the selection panel and the applicant to determine suitability of, and for, the programme. An interview checklist is used to ensure that all key areas are covered. Contents of the VES and Letter to HoS documents will be discussed during the interview.

Applicants who are unable to attend an interview due to financial hardship or support requirements please contact the Admissions Team (SVMadmissions@sruc.ac.uk) to discuss support/alternative arrangements.

3.4 Selection

Offers for places are based upon the evidence and anticipated ability of the applicant to succeed on the chosen programme. The ability to succeed is judged through the consideration of actual and anticipated academic success, the applicant's motivation for the course and evidence of commitment to the subject area. As such, an applicant's personal statement, reference, VES and Letter to HoS are key sources of information.

For the BVSci, SRUC is required to remain within requirements set by professional statutory and regulatory bodies with regards to entry requirements and applicant characteristics which may affect ability to succeed (section 3.8).

SRUC, as a Scottish Higher Education Institution, has a set number of Scottish Funding Council (SFC) places available each academic year.

These are currently allocated to Scottish domicile citizens. These applicants, who have their fees fully funded by the Students Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS), are included within SRUC's fundable numbers.

SRUC is permitted to offer additional places to applicants from the rest of the UK (rUK), Republic of Ireland and British Islands. These students are not funded by the SFC and appropriate fees are in place. Fees information is available on the SRUC website (www.sruc.ac.uk/courses-training/useful-information/fees-funding). The number of offers made by SRUC each year is carefully managed.

If SRUC is oversubscribed by applicants eligible for SFC funding, a selection process will take place.

3.5 Decisions, Responses and Communication

SRUC aims to process applications quickly and effectively. All applications are acknowledged on receipt.

Applicants are required to provide all the information requested before a decision can be made.

Applicants applying for full time HE courses will receive the outcome of their application via UCAS.

SRUC continues to accept and process applications following UCAS deadlines for undergraduate Home/rUK full-time students, where places remain available. This is indicated by the programme remaining open for applications on the UCAS website.

Exceptionally, changes may be required to be implemented at short notice to programme content or structure. Where the changes are deemed to significantly impact on the future students' experience of the programme, SRUC will write to all applicants holding offers of admission to advise of the changes and, if applicable, to offer an alternative programme of study.

Applicants who choose to accept their offer of a place are sent additional information prior to the start of their course, which provides essential advice and guidance to prepare students for the start of their studies.

3.6 Fee Status

Applicants are required to select their 'residential category' from a number of options. This information along with additional information on application form (e.g., address, length of time in UK, residency status, educational establishments, employment) forms the basis for a decision regarding the resident fee status of an applicant.

If SRUC is unclear from the information provided on the application form by the applicant which Resident Fee Status an applicant should be, admissions staff will send a 'Fee Status Enquiry' form to the applicant for completion. On return of this completed form an applicant's fee status is set.

More information on the tuition fees charged for all Scottish and rUK students who have already completed a degree is available on the SRUC website (www.sruc.ac.uk/courses-training/useful-information/fees-funding). A deposit will be required to be paid before a final offer is made.

3.7 Criminal Convictions

The BVSci is a regulated course that requires declaration of criminal convictions at the application stage. For more information, please visit our SVM criminal convictions web page for more information. If an applicant still needs to discuss any unspent convictions before submitting an application, they should contact the Admissions Team by email (SVMadmissions@sruc.ac.uk).

3.8 Applicants for BVSci programme

SRUC is required to comply with guidance provided by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) regarding the admission of students to its Veterinary programme and their fitness to practise and study on an accredited programme. Further information can be found on the RCVS website (www.rcvs.org.uk).

Veterinary degree applicants shall be made aware that fitness to practise procedures apply to the programme of study for which they have applied, and the implications of this. A copy of the Programme Code of Professional Conduct and Fitness to Practise shall be provided with the final confirmation of admission and students will be required to sign a declaration on enrolment.

3.9 Academic and Competency Standards

SRUC is committed to designing learning to be inclusive, meeting the needs of our learners, and creating learning environments where all learners feel valued and have an equal opportunity to learn. This includes a commitment to ensuring that it meets its' legal duty to make reasonable adjustments in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

The aim of Reasonable Adjustments is to ensure that all students can demonstrate the full extent of their academic abilities, irrespective of a disability or long-term condition. All SRUC programmes require students to reach specific academic standards to be awarded their qualification and the BVSci also has particular competency standards associated with professional accreditation. SRUC will not reduce or change those standards, but it is committed to ensuring that the methods of assessing those standards do not put disabled students at a disadvantage.

While SRUC is committed to supporting disabled students in line with its legal duties, those who do not declare a disability on application, which later becomes apparent during their studies, may be at risk of not achieving the programme if they cannot meet the required competence standards (Further details are available in SRUC's Reasonable Adjustments Policy).

Students are encouraged to declare a disability or other long-term medical or mental health condition during the application process and will be required to complete a Health Questionnaire during the registration process so that SRUC can evaluate their ability to meet the required competence standards and start to plan for support as soon as possible. This is particularly important for the BVSci. Students who have identified support needs on their applications are added to a spreadsheet collated by the Admissions Team. This is then shared with relevant student support teams, and they may contact applicants to further information.

3.10 Mature Applicants

SRUC is committed to, and encourages applications from, mature students (UCAS official definition: referring to anyone going to university or college after a period out of full-time education. Typically, this will mean students who are over 21 years of age at the beginning of their studies). SRUC has no upper age limit. The entry requirements for mature students are not as fixed as for school and college leavers, therefore non-standard qualifications and relevant experience may be considered. Applicants are advised to contact the Admissions Team (SVMadmissions@sruc.ac.uk) to discuss their application.

3.11 Widening Participation

SRUC is an institution committed to enabling participation in its programmes from those sectors currently underrepresented in Higher Education. It is a member of regional Scottish school leaver and adult participation in higher education programmes and recognises the value that these and other comparable programmes from elsewhere in the UK have in assisting an individual's decision to enter, and preparedness for, Higher Education. As such, participants on programmes of which SRUC is a partner may be made offers which vary from SRUC's minimum entry requirements. Further details are available in SRUC's Contextual Admissions Policy.

3.12 Care Experienced/Looked after Young People/Estranged Students Carers

Research has shown that young people who have spent time in Local Authority care or who are estranged are likely to encounter barriers to successful participation in Further or Higher Education. SRUC recognises this and is committed to ensuring known care leavers applying for and accepted on a programme are offered additional support and advice. Further details are available in SRUC's Contextual Admissions Policy.

3.13 Carers

A Carer is a person who has a significant role in looking after someone else who is experiencing illness or disability. SRUC recognises this and is committed to ensuring known carers applying for and accepted on a programme are offered additional support and advice. Further details are available in SRUC's Contextual Admissions Policy.

3.14 Advanced Entry

Advance Entry is currently not applicable for applications to the BVSci programme.

3.15 Dual Registration

Students of SRUC are only permitted to be registered for one academic award at a time. Therefore, any application which would lead to concurrent study at the same or a different level will be rejected.

3.16 Request to Defer a Place

A BVSci applicant can only defer after an offer has been made and only when there have been significant events subsequent to the initial application. If deferment is agreed applicants can only defer a place by one year,

Applicants must contact the Admissions Team (SVMadmissions@sruc.ac.uk) to discuss their individual situation if they would like to defer following an offer.

3.17 Review of Admissions Decisions and Complaints against Process

Feedback on Unsuccessful Applications

SRUC is committed to fairness and transparency in its admissions process and will respond to requests for feedback on unsuccessful applications. All feedback will be given in writing and in accordance with Data Protection legislation and will be directly with the applicant. No information will be released to a third party without the prior written consent of the applicant.

All requests should be made in writing, providing full name, admissions ID or UCAS Personal ID and the programme of study applied for and sent to the Admissions Team (admissions@sruc.ac.uk) within 10 working days of the admissions decision being notified to the applicant. The Admissions Team will then respond to the applicant within 10 working days.

Appeals

Appeals against an admissions decision will only be considered where there is additional information, which for good reason was not made available during the application or selection process and is directly relevant to the admissions decision.

All requests should be made in writing, providing full name, admissions ID or UCAS Personal ID and the programme of study applied for and sent to the Admissions Team (admissions@sruc.ac.uk) within 10 working days after receipt of feedback if this has previously been requested.

The Admissions Lead will then make the necessary investigations, and where relevant will include a review of the admissions decision and include discussion with the relevant Programme Team. The Admissions Lead will respond to the applicant, in writing with the outcome of the appeal normally within 10 working days.

Complaints

Applicants or their representatives who are dissatisfied with the service provided by Admissions should refer to SRUC's Complaints Procedure. This procedure cannot be used to change an admissions decision.

Further information:

<https://www.sruc.ac.uk/connect/about-sruc/policies-compliance/compliance/complaints-handling-procedure/>

3.18 Fraudulent Applications

All applicants have a responsibility to ensure the information submitted on their application is accurate and up to date. The decision to offer a place is based on the information contained in the application and where it is discovered that an applicant has submitted incorrect or inaccurate information as part of their application, SRUC will investigate further and reserves the right to withdraw the offer of admission or withdraw a student who has already enrolled.

3.19 Cancellation and Changes to Programmes

Programmes, services and procedures are continually reviewed, enhanced and revised and this may result in changes to or cancellation of programmes. Where any changes or cancellations occur, SRUC will notify the applicant and provide an alternative offer where possible.

4. Staff Development

SRUC has an enabling Staff Development Policy and staff involved in the Admissions process will access appropriate internal and external training and professional development.

5. Equality and Diversity

In considering applications for admission, SRUC does not discriminate on any basis including those of age, religion and belief, race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, and gender reassignment.

SRUC will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate applicants who demonstrate the academic potential to commence on and succeed on their chosen programme. Applicants with additional learning or other needs are requested to make these known at application to enable SRUC, the applicant and any advisory third parties to assess adjustments required. Applicants are advised that SRUC's courses blend academic, vocational and practical learning and for some programmes adjustment may not be possible as to do so will alter the course's learning outcomes. While SRUC is committed to make 'reasonable adjustments' for students, it must ensure that these adjustments do not exceed what would be considered reasonable within the relevant workplace.

Where an applicant declares disability and meets or is predicted to meet the minimum entry requirement a team of staff will consider the application further. The team will be appropriate for the specific applicant and could comprise representatives from Admissions, the programme management team and specialist support and services staff. The local Academic Liaison Manager may be included in the discussions.

Staff involved in the Admissions process undertake Equality and Diversity and unconscious bias training.

6. Monitoring and Review Mechanisms

At the end of each admissions cycle, the Academic Leadership Team will receive a statistical report with outcome analysis of the number of students under the auspices of this Policy.

This Policy will be reviewed for its fitness for purpose annually or when internal or external factors require change.

If change is necessary due to change in sector legislation or critical business need, exceptional approval is permitted by Learning and Teaching Committee out with this timescale and with Chair's action if required.

Document History

Rev.	Date	Description of Change