

# Policy for Student Admissions

Institute for Optimum Nutrition

## 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 The Institute for Optimum Nutrition is committed to the provision of a high quality admissions service, which ensures that prospective students embark on the most appropriate programme for their needs.
- 1.2 This policy defines the principles, which govern the admission of prospective students ensuring that education/training needs, fair access, equal opportunities and any other legal requirements are met. It applies to all applications for places on any level or courses delivered by ION. This Policy is consistent with the Institute's aims and strategic priorities.

## 2. Information for Prospective Students

- 2.1 The Institute is committed to the provision of accurate and appropriate pre-entry information and support to prospective students in order to ensure that they are enabled to make an informed decision about whether to apply for a course. ION is committed to transparent admissions procedures. Selection criteria and processes are published in relevant recruitment literature and in the procedures statement that follows.
- 2.2 Prospective students are provided with accurate and up-to-date information on the courses offered by ION and the fees charged in the literature provided, and at Open Events, through online, telephone and postal enquiries. The Institute makes every effort to ensure that the information provided is accurate when it is published.

## 3. Selection Criteria

- 3.1 Applications are assessed against academic and non-academic selection criteria. Qualifications documents or evidence of Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) must be provided as evidence of meeting academic criteria.
- 3.2 Academic qualifications
  - Prospective students must normally demonstrate a broad general education including:
    - Level 2 (GCSE or equivalent) in Maths and English.
    - 160 UCAS tariff points, which would normally include at least two 'A' levels or equivalent qualifications (Level 3), with one 'A' level in a relevant science e.g. biology, chemistry etc.
    - When English is not the first language IELTS level 7 or Advanced Cambridge

- ION welcomes transfers from NTEC accredited courses. Recognised Prior Certificated Learning is available.
- ION also welcomes mature adult learners with non-traditional entry requirement equivalents. Recognised Prior Experiential Learning is also available.

### 3.3 Non-academic criteria

- Prospective students must demonstrate appropriate motivation and commitment to studying, and a minimum level of proficiency with inter-personal communication skills.
- ICT literacy – prospective student must demonstrate a good level of proficiency in ICT and be familiar with and able to use Microsoft word processing software, have access to the Internet, a robust broadband connection and speed, and have a personal email account.
- Absence of health problems or other issues, which would prevent a prospective student from being capable of, or fit for, clinical practice. (See also section 4b).
- Checks will be made to ascertain that prospective students are resident in the UK or have indefinite leave to remain in the UK or have the appropriate visa to travel to attend clinical practice training. Copies of either a passport and/or visa will be required prior to commencement of the course/clinical practice training.

ION does not provide Tier 4 recognised courses.

The registration fee and course fee deposit will not be returned to those applicants who upon registration do not comply with UK Visas and Immigration rules. <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration>

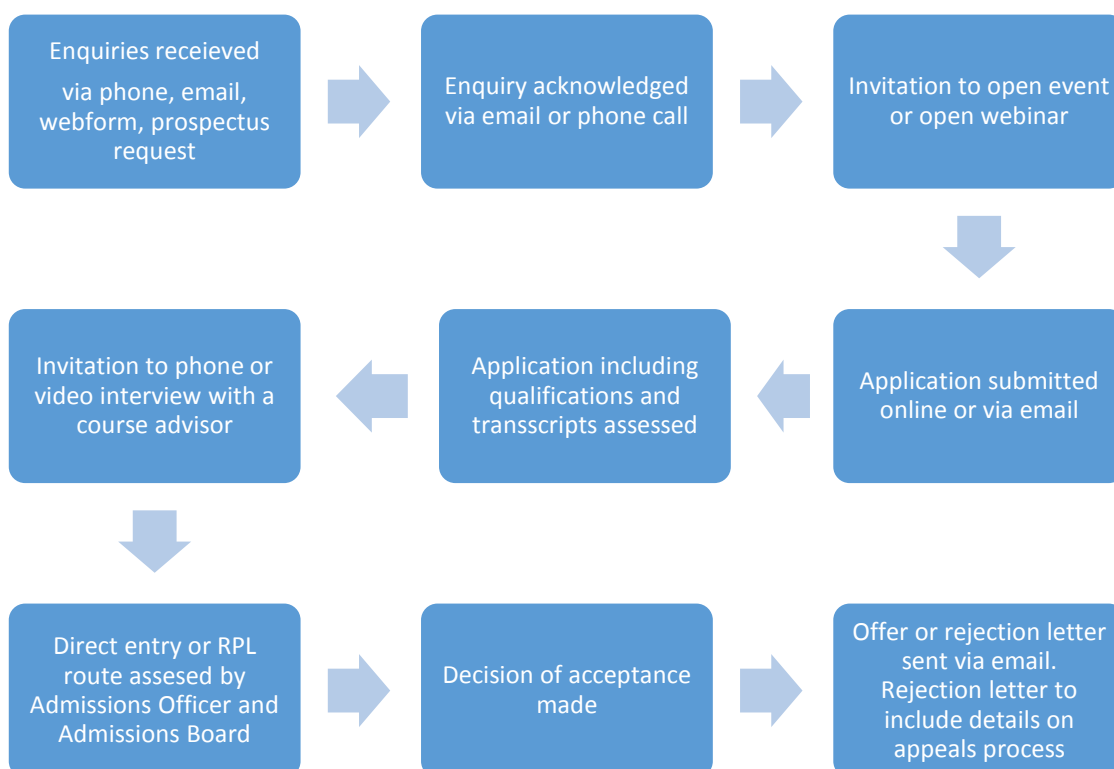
See Visa Requirements below.

### 3.4 International Students

- Prospective students who wish to practice in their home/resident country must check the qualification which they intend to enrol for is valid.
- ION accepts qualifications from other countries. Prospective students are required to have transcripts translated into English. Advice on the equivalence of qualification(s), and their appropriateness should be discussed with the admissions team.
- For courses that have compulsory clinical practice UK attendance is required.
- Visa requirements:
  - Non EU, EEA or single market prospective students if living outside UK will need to travel to ION for the compulsory clinical practice and assessment. (Prospective students are advised to apply for visas well in advance as these can take up to 3 months to obtain).
- A separate student visitor visa is required for each attendance (3 in total):
  - Level 5 (year 3): Workshop — two consecutive days
  - Level 6 (year 4): Consultations — two blocks of three consecutive days a month apart
  - All overseas prospective students are interviewed via Skype or similar, once we are in receipt of proof of identify.
- Prospective students living in the UK will need to provide evidence of either the right to reside or right to remain.

## 4. Assessment of Applications

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- ION is committed to providing a fair admissions system that admits prospective students, whatever their background, on the basis of achievement and potential, without discrimination and in accordance with our Equal Opportunities Policy and statutory obligations.



## 5. Academic Criteria

### 5.1 Prospective students who have non-UK qualifications

- The Institute has students of a variety of nationalities and welcomes applications from prospective students whose previous education does not include UK qualifications. If non-UK qualifications can be matched to the course or module entry requirements, they will be accepted as meeting the criteria. If the qualifications cannot be matched, the prospective student will be asked to an interview with the relevant Head of Course who will assess if the required level of knowledge can be demonstrated. Qualification comparisons please refer to the UK NARIC website: <http://www.ecctis.co.uk/naric/Default.aspx>

### 5.2 Prospective students who do not have the specified formal qualifications

- Prospective students without the specified formal qualifications for entry can be considered through Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL). This applies particularly to literacy and numeracy, where prospective students who did not gain qualifications at school do nevertheless have adequate literacy and numeracy skills from work experience and home management.
- For those prospective students who do not have the required science knowledge, ION offers a pre-entry access course. Prospective students have a choice of delivery options e-learning or attendance.

### 5.3 English language requirements for prospective students whose first language is not English

- Prospective students must demonstrate proficiency in the written and spoken use of the English language to the standard set by the Nutritional Therapy Education Commission (NTEC). This standard is equivalent to IELTS – score 7.0 or above, or Cambridge Certificate of Advanced English – Pass.
- If a prospective student is unable to demonstrate the required standard, they can be assessed for oral English at interview and set a writing task.

## 6. Non-Academic Criteria

6.1 All prospective students are informally interviewed in order to assess non-academic selection criteria and any needs for additional support due to disabilities, learning difficulties or health issues. They are asked a range of questions to determine their suitability to train as a nutritional therapist. The time and commitment required to complete the course are emphasized, and any concerns over the Prospective student's suitability are discussed.

6.2 Prospective students who have additional support needs

- ION is committed to ensuring its provision enables prospective students to maintain their physical and mental wellbeing. The Institute welcomes applications from people with additional support needs. ION application procedure ensures that any such applications will be considered appropriately, and that prospective students are provided with appropriate support for the application process and reasonable adjustments are made for subsequent study.
- ION will do everything possible to provide reasonable adjustments to support a prospective student with a disability, subject to the prospective student meeting the fitness to practice conditions specified by the professional body for registered Nutritional Therapists (the British Association for Applied Nutrition and Nutritional Therapy (BANT)).

6.3 Fitness to Practise

- As provider of a practitioner training course, ION must ensure that all prospective students are fit and safe to work with members of the public as clients. If there is any indication that a prospective student may be unfit to practise as a therapist due to their health, behaviour, conduct or criminal convictions, their application may be rejected. See ION Fitness to Practise Policy.

6.4 Duty to disclose criminal convictions

- The Institute has a duty to ensure the safety of its clients, student and staff community, and that of other people with whom students interact as part of their course of study. The application process requires applicants to disclose unspent and spent criminal convictions. Where a conviction is disclosed we will take this into account when considering the application.

6.5 Conduct

- ION expects all interaction between prospective students, students and staff to be conducted with courtesy and respect. We do not tolerate inappropriate behaviour towards members of our community. Hostile, aggressive or otherwise inappropriate behaviour by prospective students, or their representatives, to Institute staff, other prospective students or students will be viewed seriously and may prejudice the further consideration of an application, appeal or complaint. Prospective students will usually be warned by the Institute when their conduct is such that action is being considered, but in exceptional cases, e.g. a threat to a member of staff, then no warning need be given before action is taken.

## 7. Prospective Students Seeking Deferred Entry

7.1 Offers of places on the course can usually be deferred for one year. If deferral for more than one year is requested, a new application is required to re-assess suitability for the course, as this can change with time.

## 8. RPCL/RPEL

- 8.1 Prospective students with relevant recognized prior credited learning or experiential learning can apply for exemption from corresponding modules of the course.
- 8.2 The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is defined as the assessment of previously acquired learning (whether certificated or experiential learning) within the context of the course on which the prospective students are currently enrolled. The term RPL is used as a generic acronym to cover the accreditation of both experiential and certificated prior learning.
- 8.3 Credit for prior learning can be applied for before the start of a course and during a course. RPL evidence must relate to learning which matches the learning outcomes of named modules – specific credits. If credit is awarded for a particular module, the prospective student will, in addition to gaining specific credit, be exempt from that module’s assessment but will be given access to all the learning materials within the module. ION does not guarantee the award of any credit to any prospective student who makes a claim.
- 8.4 A student may be awarded credit for prior learning (certified, experiential or uncertified), towards the requirements of a named award up to 50% of the total credit requirements for that award.
- 8.5 Credit for prior learning (certified, experiential or uncertified) is not permitted at level 6 of a Bachelor’s Degree or for the project module of the degree in Nutritional Medicine where students are expected to complete 120 credits in order to gain the award
- 8.6 Prospective students may gain credit from courses which they have previously taken at what is deemed to be HE level. This may be a course which they have completed which has given them an intermediate award (e.g. a Dip HE), an award they have completed (e.g. HND), or alternatively, any part of a course which they have successfully passed, if they did not complete the award for which they were registered. Once an honours degree has been awarded it cannot provide credit towards another honours degree.

## 9. Additional Information

### 9.1 Fees and funding

- There is an expectation that prospective students will have sufficient funds to pay course fees during their period of study. A number of payment options are available to prospective student, including payment by instalments.

### 9.2 Institute use of applicant data

- The information contained in an application will be used primarily for the purpose of processing applications and, if admitted, it will become part of the student’s record. All data is held and processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Anonymised and aggregated applicant data are analysed by the Institute, for purposes including institutional and statutory monitoring, market research, planning, and teaching and learning and assessment, in order to ensure that our processes are fair and effective and our courses best reflect applicant need.

### 9.3 Fraud, omission, and plagiarism

- Prospective students may not omit any requested or relevant information, make any misrepresentation or give false information at any point of the application process including after

an offer is made. Should this occur the Institute reserves the right to dismiss an application, withdraw an offer of a place and/or revoke registration.

#### 9.4 Feedback to Unsuccessful Prospective Students

- A prospective student who has not been successful is able to request written feedback on the reason for the decision. Responsibility for feedback on academic and professional reasons falls with the Head of Course, with appropriate reference to the published entry requirements. Where possible the prospective student may be offered suggestions for further development/study that may be suitable preparation for any future application for the programme. It will be made clear that ION are not able to guarantee the success of a future application as the entry requirements for programmes may change over time or there may be a high number of suitable applicants for the programme in the future from which selection is made.

## 10. Procedure for Requesting Feedback

10.1 Requests for feedback must be made in writing (letter or email) within 10 working days (Monday to Friday UK GMT) of the notification of the application not being successful, to [admissions@ion.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@ion.ac.uk)

10.2 A response will normally be provided within the following 10 working days (Monday to Friday UK GMT).

10.3 A prospective student still has recourse to the Appeals and Complaints procedure having made a request for feedback.

#### 10.4 Appeals and Complaints

- In the event of a dispute it is anticipated that in the first instance the prospective student will be able to successfully resolve such matters by way of informal discussion with the relevant Admissions Officer and/or Head of Course.
- Where this is not possible, more formal action can be taken through the Appeals and Complaints procedure. Prospective students may not appeal against academic judgement. Prospective students can be assured that formal submission of an appeal will not prejudice any opinion of the prospective student, or be used to adversely affect any later dealings with the prospective student including any future applications.

## 11. Procedure for Appeals Against Admission Decisions

11.1 In the event of a dispute it is anticipated that in the first instance the prospective student will be able to successfully resolve such matters by way of informal discussion with the relevant Admissions Officer and/or Head of Course.

11.2 Where this is not possible, more formal action can be taken through the Appeals Against Admission Decisions procedure. A prospective student can be assured that formal submission of an appeal will not prejudice any opinion of the prospective student, or be used to adversely affect any later dealings with the prospective student including any future applications.

11.3 An appeal will not be considered until after a prospective student has received formal feedback.

11.4 A prospective student may appeal the decision regarding admission on any of the following grounds:

- They can provide evidence that we did not take account of all the information provided in the application when processing the application in line with the requirement for admissions of students; or;
- Substantial new relevant information which they did not include in the original application is not considered. The prospective student must provide reasons why the information was not initially included with the original application.
- If the prospective student believes they have been treated unfairly because of bias or prejudice.

11.5 To request an appeal: An appeal should be submitted in writing to [admissions@ion.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@ion.ac.uk). The appeal must include the following information:

- Prospective student's name
  - Prospective student's address
  - Prospective student's reference number where applicable
  - The course applied for
  - The information they have already received.
- There are a number of grounds for making an appeal and at least one must be specified in the letter.
  - All relevant information should be submitted at this time it is not possible to consider information that is submitted at a later point in the appeals process without good reason.
    - Verbal discussions regarding the details of the appeal will not be entered into.
    - Appeals should be received no later than 10 working days (Monday to Friday UK GMT) after notification of the admission decision. Appeals received after this date cannot be considered.
    - The appeal should clearly state the grounds for the appeal and outline the case in full, accompanied by appropriate documentation to support the claim.
    - The appeal will be considered by the Academic Review Board and the education committee to be notified immediately of an appeal process
    - The prospective student will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal within 10 working days (Monday to Friday UK GMT).

## 12. Policy Approval

The Education Committee meets biannually and is responsible for facilitating academic development and assuring quality across the range of courses. Policy and procedures are proposed by the Academic Review Board and approved by the Education Committee.

