

Owner:	Head of Admissions
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This document is part of the Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures which govern the University's academic provision. Each document has a unique document number to indicate which section of the series it belongs to.

3D – Fraudulent Applications Policy

1 SCOPE AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy outlines how Bournemouth University staff will respond when fraudulent activity is suspected within the admissions process.

2 KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Position	Role
Head of Admissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews policy as appropriate. Provides advice to staff and Partners on suspected fraudulent applications and the application of this policy. Receives UCAS Similarity Detection notifications and forwards to relevant admissions staff. Notifies the UCAS Verification Team when a UCAS application is suspected or proven to be fraudulent.
Admissions staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies suspected fraudulent activity. Liaises with applicant and the UCAS Verification Team where applicable. Reconsiders new personal statement submissions as part of the Similarity Detection process. Rejects application if appropriate.

3 LINKS TO OTHER BU DOCUMENTS

- [3E - Admissions Policy for Applicants with a Criminal Record](#)
- [3B - Admissions Policy \(Taught Programmes\)](#)
- [3F - Proof of Qualifications and Identification: Procedure.](#)

4 POLICY

- 4.1 All applications are assumed to be accurate and complete. At the time of application, applicants are required to agree that this is the case and both the UCAS application form and the BU online application carry a personal declaration to that effect.
- 4.2 However, the University must be vigilant to detect fraudulent applications which may broadly (but not exclusively) fall into three main categories:
- Applicants intent on securing a place by deception
 - Applicants intent on securing bursaries or scholarships by deception
 - Applicants intent on securing a student visa for the purpose of entering the UK by deception
- 4.3 Admission decisions will be based on the information supplied by the applicant. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all pertinent information is supplied on their

application. The omission of such information, or the supply of inaccurate information, may invalidate the application and, where relevant, any subsequent offer of a place.

- 4.4 Where an applicant does not provide enough information for admissions staff to reach a decision as to the suitability of the applicant, admissions staff will contact the applicant, their referee or employer (as applicable) to obtain the additional information required. Such information may include, but is not limited to, the following examples:
- a) Further details of qualifications/grades obtained, the awarding body, date and location of award etc.
 - b) Information about gaps in academic or work history
 - c) Missing personal information
 - d) Missing references
 - e) Clarification of information in the personal statement
 - f) Information regarding a declared criminal conviction
 - g) Gaps in education or employment where inconsistencies have been found
- 4.5 When additional information is being requested, the applicant, referee or employer will be given a reasonable deadline to produce this. If the information is not forthcoming by the deadline, the University has the right to withdraw the application.

5. UCAS APPLICANTS

- 5.1 All UCAS applications are processed through the UCAS fraud detection database which holds records of all previously detected fraudulent applications. New applications are compared, and where sufficient grounds for suspicion are detected, the applicant record is flagged and an investigation initiated (see <https://www.ucas.com/providers/services/our-products-and-systems/fraud-and-similarity>).
- 5.2 UCAS applications are also subject to scrutiny under the UCAS Similarity Detection Service which scans personal statements against a library of previous statements held at UCAS and on various websites and paper publications.
- 5.3 If the University is notified by UCAS that an applicant's personal statement has been flagged by the Similarity Detection Service, the University will review the level of similarity detected.
- 5.4 If the level of similarity is at 60% or above, applicants will be asked to provide a revised personal statement together with any information they feel is of relevance.
- 5.5 The revised personal statement must demonstrate significant changes which have addressed the identified issues. If the changes are minimal or if the applicant refuses to provide a new personal statement, the application is considered to be fraudulent and dealt with in accordance with the process outlined below.

6. SUSPECTED FRAUDULENT APPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Where an application is suspected to be fraudulent or incomplete to the extent that it is misleading, the University has the right to withdraw the application. Prior to the withdrawal of the application, the applicant will be notified of the concerns and provided with the opportunity to explain any inconsistencies.
- 6.2 If an application turns out to be fraudulent after a deposit has been paid, the University has the right to retain the deposit.
- 6.3 Where an application is withdrawn, the applicant has the right of appeal in accordance with the BU's 3T Admissions Appeals and Complaints Policy.
- 6.4 Where the suspected fraudulent application has been made via UCAS, the UCAS Verification Team will be informed.

- 6.5 All relevant qualifications and photo ID will be checked before or at enrolment in accordance with *3F - Proof of Qualifications and Identification: Procedure*.
- 6.6 If an applicant has declared qualifications which they do not hold (including forged certificates) or supplies fraudulent ID, the application will be considered fraudulent and treated in accordance with the policy outlined above.
- 6.7 Qualification or identification documents containing alternative names or inconsistent information and/or spelling must be supplemented with additional evidence.