

BA Admissions Selection Criteria

At every stage of the selection process, the staff of the Institute will be using the following criteria for assessing applicants.

- Successful applicants will show *potential* for developing the skills used in the study of humanities subjects such as for example History, English Literature, Religious Studies, Geography, and so on. Some of the important skills that are called on in studying art history include critical thinking, the analysis of texts, debating ideas, and writing.
- In addition, art history specifically demands some *potential* aptitude for the analysis of visual material. The ability to translate what you see into words, and ultimately into coherent discussion, is a skill that needs practice and development like any other. Successful applicants will demonstrate the desire to make that development, and be willing to extend their approach to visual images under the guidance of their tutor.
- Successful applicants will demonstrate their *potential* to thrive in the environment offered by a specialist teaching institute. Their level of maturity should be such that they can negotiate both large lecture courses and small seminar groups, managing tasks such as oral presentations and group discussions. A potential for some teamwork as well as individual contribution to the community is desirable.
- Successful applicants will show openness to new ideas, and a tolerance for the ideas of others. They will demonstrate both a desire to learn and the potential to be teachable.

Our commitment to widening participation in Higher Education

The Courtauld Institute of Art seeks to admit students of the highest academic merit and potential. Every application is assessed individually and holistically, and Admissions Tutors reach their decisions through a combination of metrical analysis and professional academic judgment.

When assessing applications we take into account both achieved and predicted public examination results, the UCAS personal statement and reference, and, in around 120 cases, assessment at interview.

From 2011-12 we are also using publicly available data to assemble a more complete picture of the educational and social circumstances that underpin both students' applications and their performance in our assessments. Although some of this data was available to admissions staff in the past, it will now be systematically provided in the same format for every applicant where available and may result in applications being 'flagged'. This additional information is intended to help us assess applicants more fully. Applicants who have been 'flagged' will be paid particularly careful attention, though this does not mean that they will necessarily be called for interview, made an offer or made a lower offer. Up to four types of contextual data are available:

1. **Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN)**. This is based on POLAR2 data, and will be used to give an indication of whether an applicant comes from an area where very few people tend to progress to Higher Education.

2. **Socio-Economic background.** Where available, we will seek to identify those applicants whose social background is likely to fall into National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) socio-economic groups 4 to 7 (4 = Small employers and own account workers, 5 = Lower supervisory and technical operations, 6 = Semi-routine occupations, 7 = Routine occupations) or ACORN groups 4 and 5 (4 = Moderate Means, 5 = Hard Pressed).
3. **Parental experience of Higher Education.** Where available, we will seek to identify those students whose parents have no experience of Higher Education.
4. **In Care.** Whether an applicant has declared on their UCAS application that they have been in care at some point for a period of more than three months.
5. **GCSE performance.** If the school at which an applicant sat his or her GCSEs has relatively poor average GCSE results.

This comprehensive approach to applications, ensuring that the educational and social context in which an applicant applies is taken into consideration, where supported by clear evidence that this may have adversely affected academic achievement, is critical to enabling us to diversify our student body.

We also consider evidence of clear motivation to study as a critical factor. This may include attendance at one of our outreach activities offered specifically for students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. Consideration will also be given to applicants who have completed a targeted Access scheme at another university.

We may make lower offers based on whether an applicant is deemed to have experienced educational disadvantage, where disadvantage is defined, in addition to the contextual criteria listed above, as attendance at a school/college where, in the previous year, the school/college was ranked in the bottom 40 per cent of all schools/colleges in relation to the average score per A level entry, the average score per A level entrant, or the percentage of students applying to Higher Education. For selection purposes, applicants from low performing schools/colleges may be given a lower offer compared to those from other schools/colleges. There is, however, no discrimination in favour of applicants from any particular type of background, and each case is considered on its individual merits