



CITY UNIVERSITY
LONDON

Academic excellence for business and the professions

Curriculum reform:

November 2015

City University London recognises that it is a challenging time for schools and colleges across the UK: the twin pressures of education reform and spending cuts are of particular concern for providers who send their students to our University. This document aims to provide clarity and assurance over our approach to admissions in the new curriculum as part of our overall aim to provide the most suitable information, advice and guidance for students applying for entry to City in 2017 and beyond.

Notwithstanding the new curriculum, our admissions policy will continue to strive to be fair and transparent: it also seeks to enshrine the principal of opportunity and consistency for all. We will continue to ensure that our entry requirements are appropriate for the academic needs of our programmes and for the students we seek to attract to them.



The new UCAS tariff

In recent years, City has adopted a mixed approach to entry requirements, with some programmes stating requirements in terms of tariff points and others in terms of grades. In future, in order to remove any ambiguity and confusion for prospective students and their advisers, all our entry requirements will lead with an 'A' Level offer.

We recognise that different schools and colleges will adopt different approaches and that the most significant trend amongst students is that the growing number taking a mix of 'A' level and BTEC qualifications, therefore, we will also communicate what the tariff equivalency of our offer will be. Where appropriate, we may make some offers using the new UCAS tariff system, with specific reference to the grades required from qualifications in order to meet the tariff.

We will seek to ensure that where students have the academic potential we are looking for, we maximise their chance of securing a place to study at City.

The AS-Level

We are aware that there are a number of different models which a school or college may choose when considering how to deliver stand-alone AS-Level and new linear A-Level teaching. We do not want to advantage or disadvantage students on the basis of the decisions their school or college makes; therefore, we will continue to accept AS Levels where they complement the academic profile of the applicant and may reduce our 'A' Level offer by one grade to reflect this.

We will continue to monitor the uptake of the AS Level and will keep schools and colleges updated on any decisions we make in our admissions policy on this.

Predicted A-Level grades

We recognise that there is an additional challenge of predicting grades when working with a new syllabus for the first time. Predicted grades are an important part of the admissions process and we rely on schools and colleges to be as accurate as possible in their student grade predictions. Currently, national statistics indicate that more than 50% of predictions are now over-stated by more than two grades. We therefore encourage schools and colleges to make sure that their students are applying for courses with entry requirements that accurately reflect their academic potential.

Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

We recognise the growing value of the EPQ for preparing students for independent study. Where EPQ projects are relevant to the subject we will accept the qualification as part of the application on the basis that it helps to provide a greater understanding of an individual's academic potential.

Where this is the case, we will look make an offer to an applicant which is one grader lower than our advertised 'A' Level entry requirements and must include a pass in the EPQ.

GCSE

There is significant reform to the structure and content of GCSEs from 2015. Whilst the new grade structure has the potential to allow for differentiation between applicants in the most competitive areas, we will not use the new Grade 9 until we have evidence that it would be appropriate and fair to our future students to do so.

In addition to the grade changes within the GCSE reforms, there is also debate about what might constitute a 'good pass' and the value of the grade C in the current qualification structure. Where we currently specify in our entry requirements that applicants require a grade C in English and Maths, this will now equate a grade 4 in the new system. Where we stipulate that applicants need a certain number of A*- C passes (for example in Nursing and Midwifery), this will now equate to a number at grade 4, which will be specified.

We will keep our position in relation to the new GCSE under review and any future changes will be communicated to schools and colleges.

OTHER QUALIFICATIONS:

Core Maths

The new Core Maths option is an interesting development and we will keep it under review. We will communicate our agreed approach to this qualification on our website in the near future.

Science practical

City does not offer any 'core'/pure science subjects although we do have science-based requirements across our Engineering programmes. Our approach to this changing aspect of the science curriculum is currently under review; we will communicate our agreed approach to this qualification on our website in the near future.