

The University of Queensland Union College Admission to College Policy and Procedure

Context

We are part of a national higher education system that aims to provide fair, affordable, and high-quality education and accommodation for all students. The Australian Universities Accord calls for a more equitable and inclusive tertiary education system, with improved access and support for students from all backgrounds.

We support this vision.

Our admissions practices align with our Strategic Plan 2024–2029, particularly Pillar 1: creating a place where everyone feels safe and represented.

We recognise our role in a whole-of-organisation approach to preventing and responding to gender-based violence, as outlined in the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032 and the Action Plan Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Higher Education.

We also recognise that student safety and wellbeing are foundational to participation in higher education. Our comprehensive policy framework, including our Resident Code of Conduct (RES0101), Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy (RES0202), Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Policy (RES0201), and related policies, ensures that all residents can study, live, and thrive in a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment.

Aim

We aim to provide a fair, transparent and consistent admissions process that:

- Welcomes students with academic ability and potential, regardless of social, cultural or economic background
- Supports a diverse, inclusive and safe residential community that reflects national goals for broader participation in higher education
- Helps you and your family understand who can apply, how we make decisions, and what you can expect from us.

Scope

This policy applies to all prospective residents applying for admission to Union College, including:

- Undergraduate and postgraduate students
- Students enrolled in or intending to enrol in award programs offered by universities with campuses in Brisbane, including The University of Queensland and other approved institutions.

The audience for this policy includes:

- You, as a current or future resident
- Your parents and carers
- Our workers, Board and alumni
- Partner universities and regulators.

Principles

The following principles guide our admissions process:

- Excellence: We seek students who demonstrate academic potential and a commitment to learning, recognising that this potential can be shown in different ways.
- Diversity and inclusion: We value diversity in all its forms and aim to build a community that includes students from varied backgrounds, including First Nations peoples, students from regional and remote areas, students from disadvantaged backgrounds, international students, and students with disabilities.
- Integrity: We will act fairly, transparently and ethically in all admissions decisions.
- Respect: We will treat you and all applicants with dignity, courtesy, and cultural sensitivity.
- Holistic assessment: We look at the whole person—not just academic results—considering your interests, leadership, community involvement, and how you might contribute to and benefit from life at Union College.
- Safety and wellbeing: We consider our responsibility to maintain a safe, respectful and inclusive environment consistent with our Code of Conduct, our Sexual Misconduct and Gender-Based Violence policies, and national expectations for student safety and gender-based violence prevention. All admitted residents must agree to comply with these policies as a condition of residence.

Policy

Availability of admission

To be eligible for admission, you must:

1. Be enrolled or intend to enrol as a full-time student in a university award program at The University of Queensland or another approved Brisbane-based tertiary institution.
2. Demonstrate academic potential and a commitment to your studies.
3. Show an interest in contributing positively to our community and living in a diverse residential environment.

4. Be willing to abide by our values and Resident Code of Conduct, including our expectations about safety, respect, equity and inclusion.

We:

- Make admission available to all eligible applicants, subject to room availability
- Consider applicants eligible for or enrolled at other universities to mitigate the risk of vacancies and respond to individual preferences, including siblings and referrals from alumni
- There are a limited number of places. If demand exceeds available rooms, we may place you on a waitlist managed on a “first-in, first-considered” basis, while still considering diversity and equity.

The Head of College/CEO has primary responsibility for fostering a diverse and inclusive community and has final discretion over all offers of admission.

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for admission, you must:

1. Be or intend to be a full-time student at The University of Queensland or another approved tertiary institution.
2. Demonstrate academic potential and commitment to learning, based on your academic record and other indicators of effort and achievement.
3. Show personal qualities that align with our values, such as respect, integrity, care for others, and a willingness to engage in community life.
4. Indicate how you will contribute to and benefit from life at Union College, including participation in cultural, sporting, leadership or community activities.
5. Agree to comply with our Resident Code of Conduct (RES0101) and related policies, including those addressing discrimination, bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct (RES0202) and gender-based violence (RES0201).

Application process

1. Submit your application

You submit a completed application form, including all required documentation. We clearly set out the deadlines and requirements on our website.

2. Academic information

We review your academic transcripts and achievements. We value strong performance but do not set rigid minimum grade cut-offs, recognising that potential and circumstances vary.

3. Personal statement

You provide a personal statement outlining your goals, interests, experiences, and how you would contribute to our community. This helps us understand you as a whole person and supports more equitable, holistic decision-making.

4. References

You provide two references, preferably from teachers, school leaders, or others who can speak to your character, potential, and readiness for residential life.

5. Interview

If you are shortlisted, we invite you to an interview—either in person or online. The interview helps us:

- Learn more about you and your interest in living at Union College.
- Explain our expectations, including safety, respect and gender-based violence prevention.
- Assess whether you are ready to benefit from our opportunities and contribute positively to community life.

Selection criteria

We assess your application using the following criteria:

- Academic potential and commitment to learning
- Personal qualities and alignment with our values
- Extracurricular interests, leadership and community engagement
- Potential to contribute to and benefit from residential college life
- Diversity considerations, so we can build a balanced, inclusive community that reflects national equity and access goals.

Equity considerations

We are committed to equity and diversity. When we assess applications, we consider whether you:

- Come from a regional or remote area
- Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- Have experienced educational or social disadvantage
- Are an international student
- Live with disability or health conditions that may have affected your educational pathway.

Where appropriate, we may provide additional consideration or support to applicants from these groups, consistent with national priorities to widen participation and support underrepresented students in higher education.

Decision and notification

Admissions decisions are typically made by a committee, with the Head of College overseeing and making final offers. This helps us ensure fairness, consistency and alignment with our diversity and equity goals.

We will:

- Notify you of the outcome in writing (usually by email)
- Provide an accommodation offer to successful applicants, including clear instructions on how and when to accept
- Explain whether you have been placed on a waitlist if no immediate place is available, and what this means in practice.

If you do not receive an offer, it does not reflect your worth or potential as a student. Spaces are limited, and we often receive more suitable applications than we can accommodate.

Priorities

When we need to prioritise applications, we may consider, in no particular order:

- Approved returning residents
- Siblings of approved returning residents or alums
- Potential scholarship recipients
- UQ applicants
- Applicants referred by alums
- All other eligible applicants.

Within these broad categories, we continue to apply our principles of fairness, diversity, and inclusion and avoid any practice that would unfairly disadvantage underrepresented students.

Commitment to transparency

We are committed to providing clear, accurate and accessible information about our admissions process.

We will:

- Keep our website up to date with key dates, eligibility criteria, required documentation and financial information
- Explain our process and timelines in plain language
- Provide contact details for our admissions team so you and your family can ask questions and seek guidance.

Appeals process

If you believe there has been an error in the application of this policy to your case—for example, a factual error or process problem—you may appeal the decision.

To appeal:

- You must write to the Union College Board Chair at boardchair@unioncollegeuq.com.au
- You must lodge your appeal within 14 days of receiving our decision
- You should explain clearly why you believe an error occurred and include any relevant supporting information.

The Board Chair will review whether the policy and process were applied fairly and consistently. This internal appeal process sits alongside broader sector expectations for transparent and accountable decision-making. You may also use external avenues (such as university processes or, where relevant, the [National Student Ombudsman](#)) where those bodies have jurisdiction.

Procedure (summary)

In practice, the admissions process works as follows:

1. You submit an online application and the required documents.
2. We review your academic and personal information, including equity considerations.
3. We invite you to an interview if appropriate.
4. We assess your application holistically against our selection criteria and priorities.
5. The Head of College (or delegate) confirms offers, waitlist decisions or unsuccessful outcomes.
6. We notify you in writing and provide next steps, including acceptance instructions or information about the waitlist.
7. If you believe a process error has occurred, you may appeal within 14 days as outlined above.

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Topic: Admission criteria and process for entry to Union College

Approval Authority: Head of College/CEO

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Review Date: December 2026

Audience: Current and future residents, parents and carers, Union College workers and Board, key stakeholders and regulators

DISCLAIMER: Union College's policies and procedures for the prevention of and response to gender-based violence, including sexual misconduct, are designed to be consistent with and aligned with The University of Queensland's Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy and associated procedures, as well as UQ's broader frameworks and commitments relating to gender equality, respect, and safe, inclusive campus communities.