How we choose our students

Introduction
Undergraduate Nursing programmes are traditionally very popular and the number of applicants far outstrips the number of places available each year. There are four stages to the selection process, which is governed by standards and requirements set by both the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and the Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nursing and Midwifery (NIPEC).

Funding: eligible students may have their fees paid for the duration of the three-year degree by the Department of Health and may also receive a bursary. Further information can be found on the Queen’s website at: http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofNursingandMidwifery/FileStore/Filetoupload,695940,en.pdf

Please note: If you have previously started nursing or midwifery training in Northern Ireland and accepted a fees-paid and bursaried place, you MUST include this information on your UCAS form. Even if you left after a few weeks, it really matters. It may affect your ability to access a free place.

The Selection Process

Stage 1 – Academic Selection and the UCAS Application
Applications are dealt with centrally by the University’s Admissions and Access Service. Once your application has been processed by UCAS and forwarded to Queen’s, an acknowledgement is normally sent within two weeks of its receipt at the University. In considering applications, all the information provided by you is important and you should ensure that full details are given about qualifications already completed or those still to be completed. All fully completed applications submitted by the normal closing date of 15 January (18.00 hours) are given equal consideration. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

GCSE performance is important. Applicants are shortlisted on the basis of GCSEs and currently, a minimum of 5 GCSE passes at grade C or better including English, Mathematics and a Science subject is necessary. Acceptable Science subjects are Biology, Human Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Double Award Science or Single Award Science. Please note that Applied Science is not accepted. Performance in any AS or A-level examinations already completed would also have been taken into account. Please note that additional academic criteria may be applied at shortlisting depending on the volume of applications.

Offers are normally made on the basis of 3 A-levels. Two subjects at A-level plus two at AS level would also be considered. The offer for repeat candidates is set in terms of 3 A-levels and is the same standard as for first time applicants. Grades may be held from the previous year.

Applicants offering other qualifications, such as BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma and BTEC Higher National Certificates and Diplomas, the International Baccalaureate, Irish Leaving Certificate or an Access course, will also be considered. Please note that the same GCSE profile is usually expected of those candidates taking the BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma qualification. For Graduates and those offering a Higher National Diploma, some flexibility may be allowed in terms of GCSE profile but all candidates must have GCSE Mathematics and a GCSE Science subject as above at a minimum of a grade C.

Applicants offering Access/Certificate in Foundation Studies courses will be considered individually on their own merits. Please refer to the Entrance Requirements table for further information.

A-level General Studies and A-level Critical Thinking would not normally be considered as part of a three A-level offer and, although they may be excluded where an applicant is taking 4 A-level subjects, the grade achieved could be taken into account if necessary in August/September.

Stage 2 – Review of the UCAS Personal Statement
Applicants who meet the initial academic selection criteria are subject to Personal Statement review. The Personal Statement is assessed and graded by a member of academic staff within the School of Nursing and
Midwifery and will form part of the overall assessment of your eligibility. The Personal Statement is an opportunity for the applicant to clearly identify their personal desire and motivation for a career in Nursing. It would be important as part of this, that the applicant is able to indicate their expectations of the course and their readiness to undertake their chosen career. This would include appropriate evidence of skills and attributes which they feel would make them a suitable candidate.

The school of Nursing and Midwifery will look for applicants to demonstrate the following in their Personal Statements:

- Personal desire for a career in Nursing
- Motivation for Nursing may be field specific
- Expectations of the course and Nursing as a profession
- Readiness for the course
- Interpersonal skills
- Self-awareness
- Decision making affection self and others

Those who meet the academic criteria and pass the assessment of their Personal Statement, will be called for interview to assess their suitability for Nursing training (Stage 3). Invitations for interview are sent directly to the applicant by the School of Nursing and Midwifery, from early February through to March.

Stage 3 – Interview

The interview will take the form of Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs) and are designed to test values-based skills such as communication, empathy, listening, etc. There will be eight stations, including one rest station. A number of the stations will have Simulated Patients and you will be given specific scenarios that you will be required to manage or respond to. The format will be as follows:

- You will arrive and register for interview – you will need photo ID.
- You will sign a confidentiality agreement.
- You will be directed to a waiting room, where you will receive a briefing on the MMIs process.
- You will leave all of your belongings, in a locked waiting room, and you will be directed to one of the interview circuits, which will be labelled by colour.
- There will be eight stations within each circuit, and you will progress between each one, spending five minutes at each.
- There will be one minute to prepare for each station and read the instructions; then you will enter and begin.
- There will be a rest station to allow you to gather your thoughts.
- When you have completed all of the stations you will go back to the waiting area, collect your belongings, and there will be an opportunity to feed back or ask questions. You will be expected to keep details of the interview stations confidential; any breach will be treated extremely seriously and you may be putting your chance of a place on the programme at risk.

The questions you will be asked are not technical – they are designed to find out if you would make a good nurse and to find out why you have chosen this career. At each station an examiner will use a grid to record scores on each aspect of your performance. The simulated patients will provide examiners with feedback but they do not contribute to the overall score.

Before you leave, and if you have applied for more than one field of Nursing, you will be asked to state your preference for each of the areas you have applied to. Please choose carefully, as we use your preferences to help us decide which course(s) you will be offered.

We do not currently test for Mathematics or English language, and you are not required to sit the HPAT test.

Stage 4 – Offers

Due to the lengthy selection procedure, offers are not usually made until the UCAS deadline of 5 May 2017. If you have already received offers from other institutions you do not need reply to any of these offers until after you have received the final decision from all of your UCAS choices. Do take the time to consider each one carefully.

Offers are made on the basis of rank interview score, and are subject to satisfactory Occupational Health Assessment and Criminal Records check (Access NI Enhanced Disclosure Check).

Decisions

Decisions on applicants who have been unsuccessful academically, or in the Personal Statement or at Interview will be made on an on-going basis and notified to the applicant via UCAS. We will inform you as soon as possible
if you have been unsuccessful at any stage, although please note that those who are unsuccessful following Interview will not normally know until the UCAS deadline of 5 May 2017.

Deferred Entry
Due to the demand for places and the lengthy selection process, applications for deferred entry are not considered.

Transfers
The School of Nursing and Midwifery does not normally consider transfers with advanced entry from other Nursing degree programmes.

Graduates
This course is open to Graduates. Applicants will require a minimum of a grade C in GCSE Mathematics and a Science subject (see above) or equivalent recognised by the University.

For all applicants
All applicants must meet the academic Entrance Requirements by 31 August 2017.

Additional academic criteria may be applied at shortlisting depending on the volume of applications.

If you cannot find the information you need here, please contact the University Admissions Service here, giving full details of your qualifications and educational background.