

Admissions Policy

Date: 9 June 2026

Last amended by: Tim Johnson

Overview

ThinkSpace Education (TSE) is a leading online postgraduate school serving the creative industries, helping our students turn their creativity into a sustainable career. Our aim is to create a student body that is balanced and diverse in terms of cultural background and experience and recruit students who have the ability to successfully complete their chosen course.

ThinkSpace Education will achieve these aims through:

Encouraging applications from all those with the motivation and academic ability to thrive, whatever their background

Assessing each application in a holistic way

Offering places to applicants who have the potential to successfully complete their course

Transparency in the admissions process

This policy complies with current legislation affecting the admission of students and is in line with best practice in the area of admissions; specifically the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access. This policy applies to admission to all of TSE's courses.

TSE is committed to the provision of a working and learning environment founded on dignity, respect and equity where unfair discrimination of any kind is treated with the utmost seriousness. It has developed an equality, diversity and inclusion commitment, ensuring we are compliant with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010 and more information can be found here. All TSE policies and practices are designed to meet the principles of dignity, respect and fairness, and take account of the commitments set out in TSE's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

TSE's postgraduate programmes are validated and awarded by Arts University Bournemouth (AUB). TSE operates its own Admissions Policy as an agreed exception under the AUB Learning and Teaching Assurance Framework (LTAF). All admitted students are subject to AUB's academic regulations and student policies, which are available at <https://aub.ac.uk/regulations>. Where TSE's implementation of AUB's academic regulations includes agreed adjustments, these are documented in the relevant programme handbooks and policy documents.

1 Admissions Principles

- 1.1 TSE aims to recruit students from a wide range of backgrounds and who are able to demonstrate the potential and motivation to succeed on one of our courses.
- 1.2 TSE assesses applications in a holistic way using the entirety of the application to determine the suitability of an applicant to their chosen course of study. Each application will be considered on its own merit and will be assessed against the stated entry requirements of the course.
- 1.3 TSE is committed to providing a fair admissions service for all applicants, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
- 1.4 TSE is committed to the principle of transparency and providing information in a format that is consistent across all of its channels.

- 1.5 TSE aims to conduct itself in a courteous, respectful, professional and timely manner in all matters relating to admissions.

2 Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Head of Postgraduate Education (HPE) owns this policy. Any changes to this policy, or the stated entry criteria are approved by Academic Board.
- 2.2 The Admissions team are responsible for ensuring that associated procedures are carried out in line with this Policy.
- 2.3 The HPE is responsible for ensuring that the Admissions team receive the appropriate and necessary training to be able to successfully discharge their duties in a fair and consistent way, in line with the strategic aims and objectives of TSE.
- 2.4 TSE's published course pages and other materials (such as the prospectus) that include details about entry requirements are maintained by the Admissions and Marketing teams.
- 2.5 This policy will be reviewed yearly by the HPE and where necessary, more frequently following significant changes affecting admissions in Higher Education in the national and/or international landscape.

3 Qualifications for Entry

- 3.1 TSE welcomes applications from appropriately qualified students, accepting a wide range of qualifications, including undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.
- 3.2 International qualifications will be considered and evaluated by referring to independently published guides recognised within the United Kingdom higher education sector such as UKENIC and UCAS.
- 3.3 Recognition of prior learning (RPL), including work experience and training can be used in further and higher education for the purpose of entry onto a course. Recognition of prior experiential learning (RPEL) is an extension of RPL and includes assessed learning gained from work experience.

4 Processing Applications

- 4.1 All applications are considered on an equitable basis, against published entry criteria and are assessed in a holistic way. Each application will be assessed on an individual basis and a range of criteria from the application will be taken into account to identify the applicant's ability to meet the demands of the course. This includes:
- 4.1.1 Portfolio
 - 4.1.2 Commitment, motivation and potential, normally evidenced through a personal statement or covering letter
 - 4.1.3 Relevant experience in the field
 - 4.1.4 Technical equipment, computer and software
 - 4.1.5 Personal circumstances (i.e. time and other commitments)
 - 4.1.6 Past academic performance
 - 4.1.7 Entry test or interview (where relevant)
 - 4.1.8 Predicted qualifications or grades (where relevant)
 - 4.1.9 Any extenuating circumstances
- 4.2 Applications for postgraduate courses are made using direct applications, which can be accessed through the TSE website.

- 4.3 Allowances shall be made for any candidate with verified exceptional circumstances or who has faced difficult challenges in a positive way, where these are made known to TSE (e.g. illness, death of a parent, disrupted education, or refugee status). TSE may decide to offer a place to a candidate whose academic performance appears to have been affected by such circumstances and who might otherwise have been expected to do better.
- 4.4 Applicants must be a minimum age of 21 or above to be considered for any of TSE's courses of study. Applicants who would not be 21 or older at the time of the start of the course would not be considered further for a place on their chosen course of study.

5 Offers

- 5.1 The levels of conditional offers made will be in line with published entry requirements and will not vary substantially from these.
- 5.2 An offer for a place of study will be communicated to applicants by email. This email states the conditions of offer, course, start and schedule.
- 5.3 In some instances, where a candidate has applied for one course and is not successful, an alternative course may be offered. An offer, whether conditional or unconditional, will be made in good faith, taking into account information as supplied by the applicant and/or referee at the time of the application.

6 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

- 6.1 Applications from students who have non-standard qualifications or who wish work or life experience to be taken into account as part of their application will be considered on an individual basis.
- 6.2 Applicants who wish to formally apply for RPL should refer to TSE's RPL Policy. Admission to a course or exemption from modules on the basis of credit transfer will always be on the basis of prior certificated learning that has taken place at another recognised higher education institution. Applicants can also find information about Credit and Time Limits on RPL in the RPL Policy.

7 Fraudulent Applications

- 7.1 The discovery that any information disclosed on an application or enrolment form is fraudulent, or the omission of relevant information, will result in the offer of a place being withdrawn. If this discovery is made before a decision has been made about an application, the application will be withdrawn and noted as fraudulent.
- 7.2 Where TSE is not satisfied with the accuracy or integrity of the information that has been provided, it reserves the right to ask an applicant, their referee or their employer to provide more information or submission of further documents (for example, proof of identity, evidence to assess fee status, copies of qualifications, English language test or employment history).
- 7.3 TSE requires that personal statements and covering letters submitted as part of an application are the applicant's own authentic work. TSE recognises the use of artificial intelligence and other software tools to assist in drafting written submissions. Where TSE has reasonable grounds to suspect that a personal statement or covering letter has not been authentically authored by the applicant, TSE reserves the right to request a new statement within parameters and timescales communicated to the applicant at the time of the request. Failure to provide a satisfactory response may result in the application being withdrawn.
- 7.4 TSE is required to take reasonable steps to ensure applicants have declared any qualifications gained at an equivalent or higher level to the award for which they are applying. This will involve consulting databases from statutory agencies to ascertain any previous qualifications gained.
- 7.5 If, after enrolling onto a course of study, it is discovered that a student deliberately omitted or supplied false information during the admissions process, TSE reserves the right to enact disciplinary procedures in accordance with the TSE Student Disciplinary Procedure. These may lead to the student being withdrawn from their course of study.

8 Unsuccessful Applications

- 8.1 Where TSE is not able to offer a place of study to an applicant for the course that they have applied for, a brief reason for the unsuccessful outcome will be relayed to the applicant.
- 8.2 Any request for any further feedback must be requested in writing. Applicants should contact postgraduate@thinkspace.ac.uk by email. Applicants should note that the provision of further feedback does not constitute a reconsideration of an application.
- 8.3 Applicants who receive an unsuccessful decision based upon a review of a portfolio or performance at interview will not normally be considered again for a place of study within the same application cycle.

9 Requests for Deferral or Withdrawal

- 9.1 TSE is happy to consider requests for deferred entry. Applicants may defer their entry onto a course by indicating a later start year on their application, or by submitting a request after an application has been submitted.
- 9.2 Deferral of a place of study will normally be for a maximum of one year. Applicants who wish to start on a later year of entry would be required to submit a new application. Deferred entry will normally be made under the terms and conditions, including fees applicable at the new start date for the course, not the date of application. Further detail on fees, deposits and payment is set out in the ThinkSpace Education Student Fee Payment, Debt, Refund and Compensation Policy ("the Fee Payment Policy").
- 9.3 If an applicant wishes to request a deferral of entry to the following year, or withdraw their application, they should email postgraduate@thinkspace.ac.uk stating their TSE Student Number.

10 Changes to Courses or Terms and Conditions

- 10.1 Occasionally it may be necessary to make changes to a course, regulations or terms and conditions between the time an offer of a place is made and the enrolment of students onto that course. If this occurs, TSE will ensure that prospective students are informed at the earliest opportunity of any significant changes to a course and will be advised of all options open to them. Applicants will be contacted as soon as possible, and where possible, an alternate course will be offered.

11 English Language Proficiency

- 11.1 Applicants must demonstrate that they meet the minimum expected standards of English language to be able to successfully undertake one of TSE's courses; all of which are taught in English. Applicants can demonstrate this by meeting the English language requirements published on TSE's course pages, which align with AUB's minimum entry standards. Acceptable qualifications and tests include those demonstrating proficiency in Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking. Full details are available at <https://aub.ac.uk/international/english-language/english-language-requirements>

12 Financial Support

- 12.1 TSE offers some additional financial support for students who may face additional barriers when accessing our courses. This includes grants and bursaries for individuals experiencing financial hardship, alongside dedicated funds for students who may have experience of being in care, are estranged from their immediate family, or have a disability.
- 12.2 Scholarships and bursaries are advertised on the TSE Finance page: <https://thinkspace.ac.uk/postgraduate/finance/> Eligibility and assessment criteria are set out in the TSE Financial Assistance Policy, available at <https://thinkspace.ac.uk/about/policies/>.

13 Applicants with Disabilities and Additional Learning Needs

- 13.1 TSE welcomes applicants with disabilities and additional learning needs and encourages applicants to declare these when applying for one of our courses of study so that where possible, the correct provisions can be put in place for that applicant if they eventually enrol onto a course of study.
- 13.2 Declarations and information provided about disabilities and additional learning needs are not considered when an application is assessed for academic suitability for the chosen course of study.

14 Training

- 14.1 All student admissions are coordinated by a centralised admissions team to ensure fairness and consistency. All staff working within the Admissions team and those that engage with admissions processes are appropriately trained and resourced to be able to accurately and effectively carry out their duties in line with the Admissions Policy.
- 14.2 Staff working in the Admissions team receive training in a range of areas including (but not limited to): Fair Admissions, Equality and Diversity, Unconscious Bias and Fees assessments. Training resources are sourced from multiple areas and include UCAS guidance and the QAA UK Quality Code Advice and Guidance on Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access.

15 Applicants with Criminal Convictions

- 15.1 TSE has a duty of care to its community of students, staff and visitors to ensure that it continues to be a safe place to study, work and visit at all times. As such we reserve the right to refuse admission onto a course of study if there is a significant risk of danger to our community.
- 15.2 TSE does not ask applicants for details of any spent or unspent criminal convictions as part of the admissions process.

16 Data Protection

- 16.1 In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, TSE must protect the information disclosed on any aspect of an application. In line with this legislation, we are unable to discuss any aspect of an application with a third party unless we receive confirmation from the applicant in writing stating their TSE Student Number, course applied for, date of birth, details of the person(s) the applicant wishes to allow this privilege and a satisfactory reason why this is required. This does not mean that we will refuse to accept information from a third party with reference to an application, but we will not disclose information without the permission of the applicant concerned.
- 16.2 TSE may use anonymised data that is collected as part of the application process for statutory reporting and statistical requirements.
- 16.3 Full details of how TSE collects, uses and protects applicants' personal information are set out in the TSE Privacy Notice, available at <https://thinkspace.ac.uk/about/policies/>.

17 Complaints

- 17.1 TSE aims to ensure a good and efficient experience for every applicant to its courses of study. This complaints procedure applies to applicants who have not yet enrolled onto a course. Enrolled students wishing to make a complaint should refer to TSE's Student Complaints Policy.
- 17.2 If an applicant feels they have received an unsatisfactory experience and wishes to make a formal complaint, this must be submitted in writing by email to postgraduate@thinkspace.ac.uk or by post to: ThinkSpace Education, 119 Third Avenue, Almodington, Chichester, PO20 7LB.
- 17.3 Formal written complaints will be referred in the first instance to the HPE and acknowledged within seven working days of receipt. All written complaints will receive a written reply, normally by email,

within 20 working days, or notification of the reason for any delay. This written reply will inform the applicant whether or not the complaint has been upheld and the reasoning behind the outcome.

- 17.4 If a complaint cannot be resolved by the HPE, it will be referred to the Director for further review.
- 17.5 The decision of the Director is final and represents the conclusion of TSE's admissions complaints process.