



Dear Student

I am writing to explain to you the process that we are putting in place for student admission in response to the COVID-19 school closure.

Ordinarily, we would receive applications throughout the school year and interview all applicants who booked an interview. For those offered a place, we would recommend that they **accept** that place with us if they intend to join us. We would use this information to plan our staffing. At enrolment, we would usually enrol all students who had been offered a place and met the required grades, whether they had accepted the place or not. This process worked very well at ensuring we enrolled a high number of students, but that we were not in a position of having to turn students away who had been offered a place and wanted it.

Unfortunately, the current closure means we will no longer be able to interview new applicants. Furthermore, the cancelling of exams and use of calculated grades means that a lot more students are likely to meet the minimum requirements for a place than would ordinarily be the case, while the opportunities for students to look around other colleges and make different choices will be limited due to school closure.

As a result, if schools are unable to reopen before the summer, we expect that there could well be a much higher number of students choosing to enrol with us than would ordinarily be the case. We have limits to the number of students we can take, and we do not want to be in a position of turning away students who have shown a commitment to NUAST.

Therefore, we are taking the following measures:

- All interviews are cancelled and students applying now will not be able to book an interview unless school reopens before the summer holidays.
- The option to accept a place with NUAST has been frozen.

In addition, we wish to ensure that students who have shown commitment to the school already do not miss out on places if NUAST is unable to reopen before the summer holidays. Therefore, if schools are unable to reopen before September, we are proposing the following changes to our enrolment;

Enrolment will now take place over five days; the dates of this will depend on when GCSE results day is placed and when schools are allowed to reopen. Enrolment will now be prioritised in the following way:

First two days of enrolment - will be for students who had been offered a place at NUAST and **had already accepted that place** prior to the close of school on 20th March. This allows us to give first priority to those students who committed to accepting a place with us prior to closure. All students in NUAST Year 11 who have been offered a place already will also be allowed to enrol in these two days, whether they have accepted a place or not.

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Day three and four of enrolment - Places that remain after the first two days will be kept for **students who were offered a place by us, but did not accept it** prior to March 20th 2020. Please do not worry; while we anticipate greater demand for places this year, our past experience suggests that places should still be readily available on these days

Day five - Any places remaining will be for **late applicants**, IE those applying via our website after school closure on March 20th. These students will be free to come in with their GCSE results and discuss a place with our team. Should schools be allowed to reopen before the summer holidays, we would look to interview these students in the normal way and for them to be able to join the day three and four cohort.

These measures are a contingency; should schools reopen as normal early in the summer term, we would look to returning our application process to as close to normal as possible and potentially run an induction day. Should schools reopen in this way and we feel able to reopen our application process as normal, we will write to inform students.

However, we have to accept that there is a chance that schools may not be able to reopen at all prior to September, in which case we will manage the distribution of places as fairly as we can using the process detailed above.

This is an unusual time for all of us, but I hope this letter offers as much clarity over changes to the process as possible. I know there will be parents and students who feel worried because they did not accept a place due to an oversight; please understand that this is the fairest way of managing the process if school is not able to reopen prior to September, and we are committed to ensuring as many students as possible are given a place who want one.

Please stay safe and take care.

Yours sincerely



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