



# Tutor Guidance Notes 2017/18

The SWAP East team are there to assist throughout the year. If you have questions about the information in this booklet or if you need advice or guidance at any point, please get in touch, by phone on 0131 650 6861 or by email at [swapeast@ed.ac.uk](mailto:swapeast@ed.ac.uk)

You might also find what you are looking for on our website:

[www.scottishwideraccess.org/east](http://www.scottishwideraccess.org/east)

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## 1. Introduction

These guidance notes are intended for college tutors and managers who are responsible for delivering access programmes affiliated with the Scottish Wider Access Programme (SWAP).

SWAP East access programmes are run at eight colleges in the east of Scotland. The following programmes will run in 2017/18:

<b>Borders College</b>	Access to Nursing
<b>Dundee and Angus College</b>	Access to Community, Education and Humanities (Gardyne) Access to Life Sciences (Kingsway) Access to Nursing (Gardyne) Access to Nursing and Social Services (Arbroath) Access to University Study (Arbroath)
<b>Edinburgh College</b>	Access to Arts, Social Sciences and Primary Teaching (Milton Road) Access to Languages, Arts and Social Sciences (Sighthill) Access to Languages with Business (Sighthill) Access to Life Sciences (Sighthill) Access to Physical Science (Sighthill) Access to Engineering (Midlothian)
<b>Fife College</b>	Access to Health and Life Sciences (Halbeath) Access to Arts, Humanities and Primary Education (Halbeath) Access to Nursing (Halbeath, Levenmouth, St Brycedale and Stenton)
<b>Forth Valley College</b>	Access to Degree Studies (Alloa and Falkirk)
<b>Newbattle Abbey College</b>	Access to Arts and Social Science Access to Celtic Studies
<b>Perth College UHI</b>	Access to Humanities Access to Nursing Access to Science, Technology and Health
<b>West Lothian College</b>	Access to Biological Sciences Access to Nursing Access to Social Sciences Access to Teaching

In addition, there is a wide range of SWAP access programmes on offer at colleges in the west of Scotland. These provide progression routes into universities which are part of the SWAP West partnership. SWAP West can be contacted by phone on 0141 564 7206 or by email at [swapwest@gmail.com](mailto:swapwest@gmail.com)

Further information and guidance for SWAP tutors is available in the *Tutors* section of the SWAP East website: <https://www.scottishwideraccess.org/east-tutors>

To access this section of the website, use the following details:

**Username: tutor**

**Password: teach17**

## 2. SWAP eligibility criteria

SWAP access courses are **primarily intended for adults aiming to enter higher education for the first time** and those returning to higher education after a significant gap. To meet the SWAP eligibility criteria, applicants must have been out of full-time education for at least 3 years, if they already have qualifications at or equivalent to SCQF Level 5, or at least 5 years, if they already have qualifications at or equivalent to SCQF Level 6 or above. *Please note however, that a student who has recently undertaken a full-time level 4/5 course would be allowed to continue directly on to the access programme provided that they had been out of education for 3 years prior to the level 4/5 course.*

All applicants should be interviewed before being accepted onto a SWAP programme. Interviews should be used to check that applicants meet the SWAP eligibility criteria and also to ensure that they understand the content covered in the programme they are applying to and the level of commitment required of them in order to be successful. Applicants should be informed about progression routes to university, profile grades, course-specific entry requirements, sources of funding and, if appropriate, alternatives to university (e.g. HN). At this stage, it is very important to **advise applicants that they must disclose all information relating to previous study at SCQF level 6 or above.**

**N.B. Students who already hold a university degree are not SWAP eligible** and should be signposted to the SWAP Office or to the university that they want to go to, for further advice on alternative routes for returning to higher education. **Students who have studied previously at university (but did not complete their degree) will not normally be eligible.** However there may be individual circumstances which would allow this student to be considered SWAP eligible. College admissions staff should advise the student to contact the SWAP office to seek clarification on his/her eligibility. At this stage, SWAP may also consult with the university to which the student wishes to attend to obtain further guidance on other routes.

Exceptions to the eligibility criteria will depend on individual circumstances and be considered on a case by case basis. If you are unsure about an applicant's eligibility, contact SWAP East for advice. Note that there is no minimum age limit for SWAP students; eligibility depends on the educational experience of the applicant rather than their age.

## 3. SWAP student registration

One of the first things we need your help with at the start of the academic year is **making sure that all of your SWAP students register with us.** Even though they will have matriculated with the college, we also need them to register with SWAP. This allows us to obtain their contact details, so that we can communicate directly

with them and collect data relating to their education and family background—data which SWAP requires for monitoring purposes. All personal information is treated confidentially and used only for the purposes set out in the *SWAP Statement on Data Sharing* and the *SWAP Data Protection Policy*, both of which students are invited to read and agree to when they register.

Registration is straightforward and can be done entirely online via the *Current Students* section of the SWAP East website. New students register by clicking on *Registration Form* from the menu on the left hand side. This will bring up an online form to complete. Your help in ensuring all new SWAP students are registered with SWAP East by the end of September 2017 would be much appreciated. In any case, registration will be covered during the induction talks.

#### 4. SWAP induction talks

We will be in contact with all SWAP tutors after the summer break to arrange a time to speak to your new SWAP cohort early on in the first semester. This is an opportunity for us to explain how SWAP works, cover any important points they need to know for the year ahead and give students an opportunity to ask any questions. These talks are informal and normally take between forty-five minutes to an hour. If you have a mixed class made up of SWAP and non-SWAP students, it is best if we can talk only to those who are SWAP eligible. This avoids any confusion that could be created regarding UCAS and university entry for those who won't apply through SWAP.

#### 5. Preparation for higher education (Prep for HE)

All SWAP students are required to complete at least one unit of Prep for HE as part of their access programme. It is, therefore, very important that students and tutors know how and where to access the SWAP Prep for HE materials. They can be accessed in the *Current Students* section of the SWAP East website. It is important that your students know how to access these materials.

The approach taken to Prep for HE varies from college to college and even within colleges. Most tutors use a combination of college-based personal development materials and SWAP materials, some use only SWAP materials and some prefer to work on a related SQA unit, such as Developing Skills for Personal Effectiveness. Regardless of how the Prep for HE element of the programme is delivered, it is essential that all SWAP students complete it and that you are satisfied that it has been completed to an appropriate standard.

#### 6. UCAS 2017/18

##### Registration

All SWAP East students applying to UCAS MUST register with UCAS through SWAP East. When they register with UCAS, your SWAP students will need to use the SWAP East buzzword: **swapeast2018**. Your college will have a different UCAS buzzword and this can sometimes lead to confusion, particularly if college guidance and student support staff are unfamiliar with SWAP. SWAP students should use the SWAP East buzzword, not the college buzzword.

## Completing the application

SWAP East exists as a centre/school within the UCAS system. When students are completing the education section of the UCAS application they will be asked for details of their centre or school. For all SWAP East students, their school/centre is the **Scottish Wider Access Programme East** and their centre/school number is **S75467T**.

Guidance on applying to UCAS can be downloaded from the *Current Students* section of the SWAP East website. Students should use this document to help them fill in the application correctly. The **education section** can be particularly tricky for SWAP students—the guidance will help. It is important to note that when completing the education section students should provide details of all of the units they are taking as part of the SWAP programme as well as details of prior qualifications. We recommend that UCAS applicants should include a line in the personal statement to make it clear that they are a SWAP student, as it is not always obvious to admissions officers.

## Tutor access

Early on in the academic year, Anna will send out UCAS usernames and passwords to SWAP tutors, which will allow you to log into the UCAS adviser system and access your students' applications. These usernames and passwords are unique to individual tutors. If you have colleagues who will also need UCAS access (e.g. for reference or guidance purposes), email us their name, email address, job title and why they need access, so that we can arrange this for them.

After the UCAS application deadline has passed in January 2018, Anna will regularly email UCAS Applicant Status Reports to SWAP tutors, so that you are kept up to date with your students' progress. Let us know if you don't receive these reports or if you want to opt out of receiving them.

## Guidance

UCAS guidance for students is available in the *Current Students* section of the SWAP East website. Guidance on writing a UCAS reference can be found in the *Tutors* section of the website. Help with reference writing is also available on the UCAS website. If you are new to UCAS and would like some additional support or information, let us know. We will be happy to come out and talk to you or your students. When writing the reference, tutors should headline it with SWAP student and the name of the access programme, to help admissions officers identify that the student is SWAP.

If you have colleagues within the college who are responsible for advising students on UCAS-related matters, it would be very helpful if you could make them aware of the different arrangements in place for SWAP students or put them in touch with us, so that we can explain things to them.

## 7. SWAP East progression routes

From the earliest possible moment, students should be encouraged to use the *Possible Degree Progressions* tool, which can be found on the homepage of the

SWAP East website. This allows students to find out what they can study, where they can study and what the entry requirements are for SWAP applicants.

Progression routes are updated annually, so it's very important to check progression routes using the search facility, as some arrangements may have changed since the last time you looked.

Students can apply for degree courses which are not included in the progression routes or to universities that are not SWAP East partners. However, there is no guarantee that the university will be willing to consider applications from SWAP East students; the chances of being accepted vary from university to university and from course to course. Students applying to study high demand subjects, such as primary education, social work, physiotherapy or nursing, are unlikely to be offered a place at a university which is not a SWAP East partner.

## 8. SWAP study skills events

Study skills events are an important part of the access programme for all SWAP students intending to go to university. In 2017, as usual, there will be four study skills events: two for students in humanities (Dundee and Edinburgh), one in nursing (Dundee) and one in sciences (Edinburgh).

Study skills events are an opportunity for students to find out about what it's like to study at university, get some tips and advice on study skills, speak to university support staff and meet former SWAP students who are now studying at university. All SWAP East students will receive an email later in the year inviting them to register for the relevant *Study Skills Day*. Dates for 2017 events are still being finalised, but they will take place in November and December.

**Please encourage your students to attend the event relevant to them.**

Provisional details for 2017:

Subject area	When	Where
Nursing	TBC	University of Dundee
Sciences and Engineering	TBC	Heriot-Watt University
Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences	TBC	Edinburgh Napier University
Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences	TBC	University of Dundee

## 9. Results: SWAP profile-grading and academic transcripts

We will contact you towards the end of the academic year, most likely in May, to ask you to send us the results for all the students in your class. We will ask for SWAP profile grades and a full academic transcript for every student who has completed the programme. The academic transcript is a list of all the units the student has passed and failed and includes the SQA unit title and number, credit value and SCQF level—pending results (e.g. National 5 Maths) should also be included in the transcript. We will also ask for information on the progression plans of all SWAP

students, including those who aren't going to university, and we will ask for details regarding those who have withdrawn. This information allows us to gather data and monitor trends, for example, on retention rates, reasons for withdrawal and post-access programme progression. SWAP tracks former SWAP students who go on to university and those who continue their studies at college.

We need the fully-completed documents by mid-June to enable us to check and pass on the relevant information to universities in good time. It is extremely helpful if you can submit the results to us at least a week before your summer break to allow us time to check and query any issues before you go. If there is a problem and we cannot get a hold of you, a student's place at university could be at risk.

Guidance notes on SWAP profile grading are available in the *Tutors* section of the SWAP East website.

## 10. Further information and advice

Information and resources that you might require throughout the year can be found on the SWAP East website: <http://www.scottishwideraccess.org/east>

A reminder of the details you need to re-enter the *Tutors* section of the website:

**Username: Tutor**

**Password: teach17**

If you need clarification about anything in this document or need advice on anything else during the year, do not hesitate to contact the SWAP East Office—we are there to help.

### SWAP East Contact Details

<b>Lesley Dunbar</b> <a href="mailto:Lesley.dunbar@ed.ac.uk">Lesley.dunbar@ed.ac.uk</a>	Director 0131 651 8013
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