



## **Further Education and Apprenticeship Admissions Policy**

**Agreed at SMT: 06/02/2019**

**To be reviewed: 12/02/2020**

*It is intended that this policy is 'fair to all'. Where any part could potentially lead to unequal outcomes, the policy then justifies why this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.*

## **1. Scope and Purpose**

Wiltshire College and University Centre is committed to providing a transparent, fair and inclusive FE admissions process which meets the needs of the applicant. Wiltshire College aims to encourage individuals to realise their full potential, support lifelong learning and help students, the community and business to prosper. The purpose of this policy is to set out the process of admission to the College for all applicants and details what students can expect from Wiltshire College and University Centre.

### **Policy Statement**

Students are at the heart of all that we do. The College aims to offer information, advice and guidance (IAG) at key points of the initial student journey. The college will also:

- Work with applicants to reduce or remove initial barriers to learning
- Provide clear expectations of the college/applicant partnership during the admissions process
- Clarify exceptions to the admissions process
- Identify the process for determining course entry requirements
- Set out the role of the Fair Access Panel

### **The Scope of the Policy**

The policy is applicable to all applicants wishing to engage in programmes of study within Wiltshire College and includes Apprenticeships, students on distance learning programmes and classroom based students.

## **2. Accountability**

Everyone has a responsibility to actively support this policy by ensuring that the policy is known, understood and implemented across all areas of delivery.

### **2.1 Applicants**

- To follow the admissions process as explained by the Marketing and Admissions team and set out in the college prospectuses and on the website. To meet college expectations such as attending interview dates and enrolment events.

### **2.2 Admissions Team**

- To set out admissions processes for all learners through marketing materials such as the college prospectuses, website and other relevant materials
- To ensure all staff involved in the admissions process are aware and are working to current procedures
- To provide training to staff involved in the admissions process and act as a central point of contact for all queries

- To monitor the quality of IAG provided by staff offering admissions interviews, and ensuring we work to agreed service standards concerning timeliness of interviews and offers
- To ensure offers made are appropriate and meet college entry requirements
- To ensure appropriate referrals are made to the Fair Access Panel
- To ensure appropriate referrals are made to other teams such as Learning Skills Development Service (LSDS) Careers Guidance (CG), and Student Services (SS) to remove barriers to learning
- To lead applicants through the admissions process until they are enrolled and are active students at the college

### **2.3 Course and curriculum representatives**

- To provide accurate and up to date information to the Admissions, Careers and Marketing Teams enabling them to give accurate IAG to prospective students
- To offer impartial information to applicants during admissions interviews
- To know when to refer and to make appropriate referrals to other college teams such as LSDS, CG, and SS to remove barriers to learning

### **2.4 Marketing**

- Work with curriculum teams to collate up to date and relevant information about courses available
- Agree and clearly set out college and course entry requirements, working with curriculum heads and Admissions team to review these regularly
- Provide accessible information to help prospective students make informed and objective choices

### **2.5 Heads of Department**

- To work with Marketing and Admissions to ensure the most up to date information is provided about courses available including entry requirements
- Work to a process that allows the formal and measured review of course entry requirement at appropriate times during the college year.

### **2.6 Senior Management and Board of Governors**

- To support the development of the Admissions Policy
- To seek to include SMT representation on College Committees related to admissions, such as P&Q and CMG meetings

### **2.7 Student Services and Career Guidance staff**

- To receive referrals from the Admissions Team and interviewing tutors and respond appropriately providing impartial IAG to prospective students
- To endeavor to work with other college teams and/or outside agencies to remove potential barriers to learning.

## **2.8 The Quality team**

- Will work with the Admissions Team to monitor and review the quality of IAG offered to all applicants
- Will ensure that both informal and formal complaints, appeals and compliments are logged and responded to, in accordance with the Complaints and Compliments Procedure.

## **3. Process and Procedures**

### **3.1 Working with Applicants to reduce barriers to learning**

- The college will engage with the Local Authority EHCP consultation process as set out in the SEND Code of Practice (January 2015) and will provide information to the Local Authority as to the college's ability to meet the educational support needs of the young person. A positive confirmation of this will not necessarily mean acceptance to the vocational programme of study applied for, and applicants will still be required to follow the application and interview process set out in this policy.
- Where admittance of a student with an EHCP will require additional funding from the Local Authority (to ensure all needs can be met), it may be necessary for the college to issue a conditional offer of a place until such time as the Local Authority has confirmed that funding is approved.
- Where a student applies to the college and receives an offer of a place without disclosing their EHCP or learning needs, it may subsequently be necessary for the college to review any offer issued to ensure its ability to meet the statutory duty as detailed in the SEND Code of Practice.
- Students with EHCPs should also be referred to the Learning Skills Development Service (LSDS).
- Referrals are made to the Learning Skills Development Service, Student Services and Careers Guidance by all teams, where appropriate, to reduce or remove barriers to learning. LSDS works with schools and agencies to establish potential barriers and work with students and their families to suggest and implement support packages.

### **3.2 Clarify exceptions to the admissions process**

- Although college and course requirements are set and communicated to all applicants, certain exceptions may apply. These are at the discretion of the Head of Department and may include reasons such as interrupted schooling, portfolio instead of grades on entry, medical difficulties or home schooling. The final decision is made by the Head of Department and may include conditions of enrolment.
- Applications from students under the age of 16 on 31<sup>st</sup> August prior to their course start date should be made by their school or current education provider.
- The College has the right to refuse admission to a course, where the applicant does not meet the criteria set out in the relevant funding guidance.

- The College has the right to refuse admission to apprenticeship training where the student does not meet entry requirements of the programme or where their current employment does not cover the scope of the apprenticeship.

### **3.3 Identify the process for determining course entry requirements**

- SMT agree and set the college entry requirements. Admissions will confirm interview requirements with each curriculum area which may include assessments, auditions or portfolios.
- The relevant Assistant Principal is responsible for ensuring consistency of entry requirements across curriculum areas and will respond to requests for changes to entry requirements.
- Deadlines for making changes must be in line with Marketing requirements to meet deadlines for prospectus production and student recruitment. Entry requirements cannot be changed once recruitment for the next academic year has started.

### **3.4 Interview non attendance**

- The college reserves the right to withdraw any applicant who does not attend their College interview and does not contact the College, The College will endeavour (wherever appropriate) to contact the applicant either directly or via their school or college to ascertain the reasons for their non-attendance and will offer an alternative date.

### **3.5 Initial Assessment**

- Any information from initial assessments will be used to determine the appropriate level of study and used as a diagnostic for assessing potential learning support needs for students to the curriculum teams, LSDS and Admissions to help them with their studies. Reasonable adjustments to the initial assessment process may be made for candidates with disabilities

### **3.6 Provide clear expectations of the college / student partnership during the induction process**

- All students are inducted into college before taught lessons start. During induction the college expectations should be outlined along with what the college commits to offering. We do this using the Student Agreement.

### **3.7 Equality and Diversity**

- The College welcomes applications from applicants irrespective of their age, disability, family responsibility, marital status, race, ethnicity, nationality, faith, gender or sexual orientation, in line with the College's Single Equality Scheme.

### **3.8 The role of the Fair Access Panel**

- The Fair Access Panel will consist of the Director of Funding & Learning Resources, the Heads of Safeguarding, LSDS, Accommodation and Teaching, Learning and Assessment and Assistant Principals and Heads of Department where appropriate. The aim of the panel is to ensure the right support is being offered for students currently on programme. The panel will also discuss and agree the most appropriate progression for students who have experienced barriers to learning or who have not met college expectations in a previous year of study at the college.
- Other potential support needs and barriers to learning will be identified during the screening process that Admissions carry out. These will be subject to appropriate referrals such as Student Services, LSDS and Careers Guidance.
- Where new applicants are declined and wish to appeal this decision, they can ask for their case to be referred to the Panel who will look collectively at all relevant information and ensure the decision is fair and appropriate. The college reserves the right not to accept a student in College but will work with them to refer to more suitable provision, as appropriate

### **3.9 Course Closure**

- Where a course is under-subscribed or there is a significant change to government funding which creates non-viability, the College reserves the right to withdraw the course (including after an offer has been made or accepted). In such cases, applicants will be offered advice and guidance on the availability of alternative courses, both at the College and with other suitable alternative education providers wherever possible.

## **4. Criminal Convictions and DBS Check**

- Applicants are required to declare criminal convictions within the application process, prior to starting their course. A course offer may be refused for applicants with certain criminal convictions so as to safeguard the whole student community. All applicants who declare an unspent criminal conviction are required to meet with the safeguarding team prior to curriculum interview.
- The College does not normally require applicants to be DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked other than those who apply for specific courses in Health and Social Care or whom are required to have a DBS check for their work placement or reasons of professional requirement in that sector. This DBS checking will normally be completed as part of the enrolment process. All offers for courses where there is a DBS check requirement will be conditional on successful DBS clearance.
- Under exceptional circumstances, the College might require an applicant to have a DBS check as an admission requirement.

## **5. Data Protection**

- The College will handle data and information in a manner that ensures that it safeguards individuals and personal data. Information will always be managed in a manner that complies with the College Data Protection Policy. All staff involved in admissions have received training that enables them to discharge their responsibilities in relation to data protection.

## **6. Associated Documents**

- IAG Policy
- Compliments and Complaints Procedure
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy

## **7. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation**

- The department/team responsible for each area of student enrolment has an obligation to analyse and report the effectiveness of provision utilising tools such as observation records, service standards and customer feedback.
- Student enrolment results may be aggregated at different levels (by college, campus, subject area etc.)
- Issues arising may be addressed at various levels within the college. Key trends, areas for development, and key responses, form a major element of the annual Quality Cycle. Results of enrolment will be analysed and priority areas for action and improvement targets set within departmental areas and the organisation's overall Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan. Action Plans will be monitored by the Quality Team.
- The Director Funding and Learning Resources and Head of Teaching, Learning and Assessment will report regularly to SMT and annually to the Board of Governors and the Quality and Curriculum Committee.

## Document Information

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## Revision History

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