

# Admissions Policy

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## Our Mission

**Inspire ambition and make a positive difference to lives through learning.**

## Our Values

**Learners First** - placing the learner at the heart of all we do

**Community** - working collaboratively to achieve

**Empowering** - enabling all in a caring environment to achieve their full potential

**Excellence** - a culture of creativity, high expectations, ambition and aspiration

**Diversity** - celebrating diversity and inclusivity as a key to our success

**Integrity** - honesty, openness and trust at the heart of College life

**Respect** - showing fairness, courtesy and mutual respect

# Admissions Policy

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Windsor Forest Colleges Group (TWFCG) is committed to the principle of equal opportunity for all potential learners. We offer an admissions service where applicants are treated solely on the basis of their prior learning and qualifications, abilities and potential, regardless of race; disability; gender; gender reassignment; age; nationality; sexual orientation; religion or belief; marital or civil partnership status; pregnancy or maternity status; or socio-economic status, background or class.
- 1.2 Programmes have differing entry criteria but all require a commitment to, and enthusiasm for learning. This policy applies to all applicants seeking entry to TWFCG onto all programmes of study including, full time, part-time, Higher Education and Apprenticeships. It applies only to external applications new to the college, applications for students already attending the College Group are managed internally.

## 2. Policy Statement and Aims

- 2.1 The TWFCG will ensure that all applications are handled individually and will recruit with integrity, placing the best interests and success of the applicant foremost in the recruitment process.
- 2.2 This policy sets out the overriding principles of the admissions processes and procedures at the College Group. These are supported by detailed entry criteria on the college website and in relevant course publications

## 3. Principles of the Policy

### 3.1 Admissions Criteria

- Every applicant is considered individually using all the information available to us. The College Group is committed to an admissions process which is easily understood, transparent and fair
- The decision to admit an applicant will be based upon the meeting of specific entry requirements or equivalent of the relevant course or programme. Where stated as part of the entry criteria, applications should be supported by satisfactory references. Exceptional circumstances will be considered
- Entry criteria, which may apply by College, type of provision and/or for an individual course, are located on the college Group website, in college prospectuses and other key publications. If an applicant does not meet the entry criteria, the College reserves the right to decline an offer of a place on a course or programme of study at The Windsor Forest Colleges Group
- An applicant will be taken on to a course or programme leading to a qualification only where it is confidently and reasonably believed that they have a good chance of achieving the qualification aim. Decisions to admit applicants are taken by the Business Unit Director/ Director of Curriculum / Head of Department (or a nominated deputy, for example a Curriculum Leader), with responsibility for the substantive qualification of the programme

- Enabling students to progress and succeed through levels of study is fundamental to the College Group's purpose and commitment
- The College Group will carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for applicants to some courses and programmes where this is a requirement of an integral industry placement or of the resulting career pathways. When a (DBS) disclosure is required, the resulting certificate will inform the decision as to whether a place is offered
- The College Group celebrates diversity and challenges discrimination. We welcome applications from anyone with the potential to succeed. No applicant will be excluded from entry as a result of discrimination on the grounds of their protected characteristics (see 1.1 above)
- The exception to this is that we reserve the right to make decisions relating to the appropriateness of admission in connection with the age of any applicant where safeguarding best practice requires the College Group to do so
- This policy is consistent with good admissions practice in higher education and its associated procedures have been developed in accordance with the Office for Students Regulatory Framework and the Expectation of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (August 2018) that:
  - 'The provider has a reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system'. It also takes account of the Office for Students requirement that 'students are recruited to courses for which they have the capability to achieve a successful outcome'.

### **3.2 Advice and Guidance**

The College Group is committed to ensuring all applicants are offered the opportunity to access impartial and confidential advice and guidance regarding college courses, onward pathways, and services from the Information, Advice and Guidance Team, and curriculum staff as part of the interview process.

### **3.3 Your personal information**

Personal information provided to the college may be shared with third parties for education, training, employment and well-being related purposes, including for research. This will only take place where the law allows it and where the sharing is in compliance with data protection legislation. Students starting at the College will have had access to the relevant Privacy Notice and have the option of opting in or giving consent for any items not covered by a legal requirement to process. This is covered on the enrolment form and the Privacy Notice is available on the College Website.

The College Group will use all personal data in accordance with the rights given to Individuals under Data Protection Laws and will ensure that it allows individuals to exercise their rights in accordance with the College's UK GDPR Policy.

### **3.4 College Marketing**

We take seriously the need to ensure that the information contained in College publications (both printed materials and online) is accurate at the time of publication. However, the college reserves the right to cancel, amend the entry criteria, or alter the content of any course or programme. Where this is necessary, applicants will be advised at the earliest opportunity.

### 3.5 Course Fees

Fees for courses and programmes are set out in the College Group's Fees Policy, including fees for EU students following Brexit. Information regarding any fees payable can also be provided by the Admissions team.

## 4. Implementation of the Policy

4.1 The College Group is committed to ensuring that applicants are offered a structured, responsive and accessible admissions service, including:

- Interviews arranged at appropriate times to enable applicants to meet with curriculum staff to discuss and explore their chosen qualification(s) in order to make an informed decision.
- An online application process that generates an instant acknowledgement; and a response from the college within seven working days.
- The opportunity to receive impartial advice and guidance before enrolment from our Information, Advice and Guidance Team and/or curriculum staff.
- The opportunity to confidentially disclose specific learning needs, disabilities and health conditions that may impact on learning.
- Clear, consistent and accurate information on course and programme entry criteria, fees and qualification aims.
- Information provided in accessible formats and access arrangements for applicants requiring support during the application and interview process.
- Full and equal consideration for those who apply late. Late applications will be considered on an individual basis if there are still places available on the relevant course or programme.
- Progression meetings with curriculum staff for internal applicants to discuss progress and advancement. Learners wishing to progress within the College Group will, subject to meeting entry requirements, be offered a place on an appropriate course or programme at the next level.
- A conditional or unconditional offer for a course or programme will be made, or if unsuccessful in their application, impartial advice and guidance regarding other internal or external opportunities will be offered.
- Impartial advice, signposting and support for those individuals with needs the College Group cannot support, or for whom the College Group, its programmes or facilities may not be appropriate, safe or beneficial (e.g. individuals who need on-going supervision, or those who may pose a risk to self or others in a college environment).

- Information, advice and guidance, and other services as detailed above when programmes do not require an interview.
  - Procedures for appealing against an admissions decision or for making a complaint. (see Section 7 below).
- 4.2 Curriculum leads have the responsibility for ensuring that their staff have the appropriate skills and training to carry out interviews and are clear when to refer applicants for independent IAG.
- 4.3 Whilst the College aims to place all applicants, subject to availability of places, on a programme of his/her choosing or a reasonable substitute, it recognises that the provision and services offered may not be suited to all individuals at the time of their applications.

## 5. Applicant Expectations

### 5.1 The applicant is expected to:

- Satisfy all pre-programme requirements including accurate completion of an application form and subsequent enrolment documentation (including details of prior qualifications, predicted and/or actual grades achieved).
- Where required, attend an interview to assess suitability of the chosen programme of study (this may not be required for some adult, part-time courses and programmes).
- Attend and participate fully in all requested pre-programme initial, diagnostic and/or aptitude based assessments.
- Meet the specified entry criteria of the course, or of all courses constituting the programme of study, meet any other admissions criteria, or satisfy the relevant Vice Principal or Director as to their ability to successfully complete the course or programme.
- Demonstrate to the College Group's satisfaction that any previous qualifications gained outside the UK, or awarded by an institution based abroad or not recognised by the UK government, are considered equivalent to the entry requirements of the particular course or programme for which an application has been made.
- Where required, be supported by satisfactory references.
- Pay the course or programme fees (in line with college Fees Policy) promptly and prior to starting the programme, and where appropriate, provide information on any pending application for an Advanced Learner Loan or Higher Education Loan through Student Finance England.
- Demonstrate, by providing appropriate documentation if requested, the entitlement to government funding for education in the UK.

## 6. Criminal Convictions

- 6.1 The College Group works within the requirements of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, and as such will only require disclosure of relevant convictions.
- 6.2 Relevant convictions are those related to offences against the person, whether of a violent or sexual nature, and convictions for offences involving unlawfully supplying controlled drugs or substances where the conviction concerns commercial drug dealing or trafficking.
- 6.3 Any applicant to the College Group must disclose any relevant criminal convictions via the application form and prior to enrolment.
- 6.4 Disclosure of a relevant criminal record will not necessarily preclude an individual from joining a course, but a risk assessment will be required and additional conditions may be placed on admission.
- 6.5 When a relevant criminal conviction is disclosed, the applicant must comply with the College Group's risk assessment procedures, including providing additional information as requested and taking part in a meeting or phone call as necessary.
- 6.6 Where a decision to refuse entry is made by the safeguarding team, the applicant may appeal to the Group Principal and CEO.

## 7. Non Acceptance onto a Programme of Study

- 7.1 A place on a programme of study may be withheld on a short term or indefinite basis if one or more of the following situations are in evidence. This list is indicative only and is neither exhaustive nor exclusive. The College reserves the right to make the final decision on whether to accept an application or enrolment to the college. It also reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place at any time during the applicant/learner's time on their course or programme if additional information becomes available which impacts on the original decision to offer a place.
  - The applicant is subject to an exclusion or suspension from this or another educational institution at the time of application
  - The College Group has a reasonable belief that the applicant has caused a disruption to good behaviour at this or any other educational establishment
  - The applicant has an undisclosed criminal conviction which makes a particular programme unsuitable
  - The College Group has a reasonable belief that admittance may cause a risk to the applicant or others' health & safety
  - The College hosting the course may reasonably be supposed be unsuitable and/or an unsafe environment for the applicant (including but not limited to, if the College has reasonable belief that the applicant is not mature enough to keep themselves safe, has



significant poor mental health, requires constant supervision, is a potential serious risk to self or others, or has substantial medical needs that cannot be supported on campus)

- The college has information that the applicant has previously attended this or another educational institution and has repeatedly demonstrated a lack of commitment
- The applicant has outstanding debts with the College
- The applicant provides false or misleading information on an application form, enrolment form or during an interview

7.2 Curriculum staff who interview applicants to whom one or more of the above situations apply should seek advice from the relevant Curriculum Lead and/or Vice Principal and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead, before offering a place or making a referral.

## **8. Appeals Process**

8.1 Where an application to attend a course or programme of study has been rejected for any reason, the applicant may appeal in writing to the Head of Admissions.

8.2 Grounds for appeals can only be because the applicant:

- Disagrees with a decision made in accordance with the Admissions Policy

Or;

- believes that the Admissions Policy has not been correctly applied in the processing of their application

8.3 All appeals will be assessed by the Vice Principal and/or Business Unit Director responsible for the delivery of the programme, in consultation with the Head of Admissions and School Liaison, and where appropriate the Head of Health and Safety, the Assistant Principal Student Services or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

8.4 Applicants will be notified of the appeal decision as soon as possible but within 10 working days.

## **8. Monitoring, Evaluation & Review**

The compliance of the policy is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and reviewed every three years unless there are intervening changes in legislation.

## **9. Associated Documents**

- Diversity and Equality Policy
- UK GDPR Policy

- Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Fees Policy
- Compliments and Complaints Policy
- Quality Frameworks
- Privacy notice for Students