

# Higher Education Admissions Policy

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## Vision, Purpose & Values

### Our Vision

Our students will be recognised locally & nationally for their positive impact on the communities and industries in which they choose to work.

### Our Purpose

To inspire our students to gain the skills, knowledge and behaviours they need to be resilient and thrive in an ever-changing world.

### Our Values

**Excellence:** A culture of creativity, high expectations, ambition and aspiration

**Respect:** Showing fairness, courtesy and mutual respect to each other and our environment

**Integrity:** Honesty, openness and trust at the heart of College life

**Diversity:** Celebrating diversity and inclusivity as a key to our success

# Higher Education Admissions Policy

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## 1. Introduction

The Windsor Forest Colleges Group (TWFCG) is committed to the principle of equal opportunity for all potential learners at the College and we offer an Admissions service whereby applicants are treated solely on the basis of their merits, 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.

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 Higher Education programmes.

## 2. Policy Statement and Aims

The WFCG will ensure that all applications are handled individually and will recruit with integrity, placing the best interests and success of the learner foremost in the recruitment process.

This policy sets out the overriding principles relating to Admissions Processes and Procedures at the College as set out below and is supported by detailed entry criteria to be found on the college website and in relevant course publications

The aims of the College Admissions Policy is to clearly outline the College approach, principles and key processes in managing admissions to the College so that these are clear to applicants or others with an interest in such a policy.

## 3. Principles of the Policy

### 3.1. Admissions Criteria

- Every applicant is considered individually using all the information available to us. The College is committed to an admissions process which is easily understood by applicants, transparent and fair.
- The decision to admit an applicant should reflect the meeting of specific entry requirements or equivalent of the relevant programme. Where required by entry criteria applications should be supported by satisfactory references if applicable. Exceptional circumstances can be taken into account.

- Entry criteria where they apply by College, type of provision and or for each course are located on the College 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 programme of study at The Windsor Forest Colleges Group.
- An applicant will be taken on to a programme leading to a qualification only where it is confidently and reasonably believed that they have a good chance of achieving the agreed qualification aim. Decisions to admit applicants are taken by the Directors of Curriculum (or nominated Deputy, for example Head of Department), with responsibility for the substantive qualification of the programme. Nominated Curriculum Managers are responsible for recruiting to the programme with integrity.
- Enabling students to progress through levels of study is key to the College's purpose and commitment in supporting students to succeed whilst both attending and beyond The Windsor Forest Colleges Group
- The College will carry out a timely Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check of applicants to certain programmes and in specific circumstances. When a (DBS) disclosure is requested, the outcome will inform the decision as to whether a place is offered.
- The College celebrates diversity and challenges discrimination where we find it and 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 age, disability, gender, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion sexual orientation or transgender status. We reserve the right to make decisions relating to appropriateness of admission in connection with the age of any applicant where safeguarding best practice requires the College 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 Schwartz principles of 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 is committed to ensure all Higher Education applicants will be offered the opportunity to access impartial and confidential Information, and Advice regarding College courses and services from the Central Admissions Team Advisers and relevant curriculum staff as part of the interview process

### **3.3. Your Personal Information**

The 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 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 on 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 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 on line) 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 programme. Where this is necessary, applicants will be advised at the earliest opportunity

### **3.5. Course Fees**

The current College policies regarding Fees are included in the College Fees Policy updated annually including fees for EU students following Brexit which is available on the College Website . Information regarding any fees payable can also be provided by the College Central Admissions Team.

## **4. Implementation of the Policy**

The College is committed to ensure that applicants and prospective learners are offered a structured, responsive and accessible admissions service, including:

- 4.1. Ensuring that interviews are arranged at appropriate times to enable applicants to attend interview with curriculum staff to discuss, explore their chosen qualification in order to make an informed decision.

- 4.2. Applicants applying via the College's online application process will receive an instant acknowledgement; the service standard for then processing and contacting the applicant is seven working days.
- 4.3. The opportunity to receive impartial Information and advice at enrolment from our Admissions Team and curriculum staff where necessary.
- 4.4. The opportunity and encouragement to disclose their specific learning needs and disabilities.
- 4.5. Clear, consistent and accurate information on programme entry criteria, fees and qualification aims.
- 4.6. Information provided in accessible formats and other appropriate arrangements in place for applicants requiring support during the application and interview process.
- 4.7. Opportunities to visit the college and to meet relevant curriculum staff with whom to discuss the particular programme(s) in which they are interested.including taster days and other events, as appropriate.
- 4.8. Applicants who apply late will receive full and equal consideration. Later applications will be considered on an individual basis if there are still places available on the relevant programme.
- 4.9. Progression meetings with tutors for internal applicants to discuss progress and advancement. Learners wishing to progress within the College will, subject to meeting entry requirements, be offered a place on an appropriate programme.
- 4.10. A conditional or unconditional offer on a suitable programme, or if unsuccessful in their application, impartial advice and guidance regarding other internal or external provision and referral as appropriate.
- 4.11. 4.10 The College reserves the right to withdraw an offer at any time if additional information becomes available which impacts on the original decision to offer a place.
- 4.12. An offer subject to a DBS check for accepted learners where this is required for a programme (DBS checks with be processed in line with the Disclosure and Barring Service disclosure procedures).
- 4.13. Impartial advice, signposting and support for those individuals for whom the College, its programmes or facilities may not be appropriate.

- 4.14. Where programmes do not require an interview applicants can still expect to access information, advice and guidance and other services as detailed above.
- 4.15. Procedures for appealing against an admissions decision or for making a complaint. (see Section 7 below).
- 4.16. Curriculum Managers 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.
- 4.17. 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. The Applicant is Expected to:

- 5.1. 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).
- 5.2. Attend an interview to assess suitability to attend the chosen programme of study (may not be required for some adult part time programmes).
- 5.3. Attend and participate fully in all requested pre programme initial, diagnostic and or aptitude based assessments.
- 5.4. Meet the specified entry criteria of all programmes constituting the programme of study and any other admissions criteria, or to satisfy the relevant Business Unit Directors and Principals as to their ability to successfully complete the programme.
- 5.5. Demonstrate that any previous qualifications gained outside of 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 programme for which an application has been made.
- 5.6. Where applicable be supported by satisfactory references.
- 5.7. Pay the programme fees (in line with college Fees Policy) promptly and prior to starting the programme, and where appropriate, provide information and advice on Advance Learner Loans or Higher Education Loans through Student Finance England.



- 5.8. Demonstrate, by providing appropriate documentation if requested the entitlement to government funding for education in the UK.
- 5.9. Demonstrate that he/she meets English Language and visa requirements of the home office if studying in the UK as an international student.
- 5.10. All applicants must disclose any criminal records or other issues which might reasonably be considered to impact on their suitability to join a course at College. When considering applicants with criminal convictions, the College will comply with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Applicants to some courses may require mandatory DBS checks.

## 6. Non-acceptance onto a Programme of Study

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:

- 6.1. The applicant is subject to an exclusion or suspension from this or another educational institution at the time of application.
- 6.2. The College has a reasonable belief that the applicant has caused a disruption to good behaviour at this or any other educational establishment.
- 6.3. The applicant has a criminal conviction which makes a particular programme unsuitable for the applicant at the time of application.
- 6.4. The applicant has declared at the time of application and or the college becomes aware that they have a relevant criminal conviction which, following a risk assessment, leads the College to reasonably believe that admittance may cause a risk to other learners or staff at the College.
- 6.5. If the college has information that the applicant has previously attended this or another educational institution and has repeatedly demonstrated a lack of commitment.
- 6.6. The applicant has outstanding debts with the College.
- 6.7. The applicant provides false or misleading information on an application form, enrolment form or during an interview.
- 6.8. The above 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.

- 6.9. Curriculum staff who interview applicants to whom one or more of the above situations apply should seek advice from the Business Unit Director before offering a place or making a referral.

## 7. Appeals Process

- 7.1. Where an application to attend a programme of study has been rejected for any reason, the applicant may appeal in writing to the Head of Admissions.
- 7.2. Grounds for appeals are either 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
- 7.3. All appeals will be assessed by the Principal and Curriculum Managers responsible for the delivery of the programme, in consultation with the Head of Admissions and School Liaison . At the request of the Principal, then the relevant Head of Curriculum can deputise for the Curriculum Manager.
- 7.4. Applicants will be notified of the appeal decisions as soon as possible but certainly within 10 working days.

## 8. Monitoring, Evaluation & Review

- 8.1. The compliance of the policy is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and reviewed every three years taking into account any changes in legislation.

## 9. Associated Documents

- Diversity and Equality Policy
- UK GDPR Policy
- Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Fees Policy
- Complaints Procedure and Policies
- Quality Frameworks
- Privacy Notice for Students

