Applications/Admissions Policy Full/Part Time, and Apprenticeships 2025/26

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Owner: Sue Churches/Kaylee Hargreaves/Rosie Mann

Reviewer: Samantha Rooney

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Putting Students First

Contents

Chronology of updates 3
1. Introduction 4
2. Policy Statement 4
3. Scope 4
4. Legal and Regulatory Framework 4
5. Definitions 5
6. Policy Objectives 5
7. Responsibilities 6
8. Procedures 7
9. Training and Awareness 8
10. Monitoring and Review 8
11. Confidentiality/Record keeping 8
12. Communication 8
13. Evaluation and Reporting 9
14. Review and Amendment History 9
15. Approval 9

Chronology of updates

October 2024	Complete rewrite to align with new College template sections
October 2024	Section 4: Added links to legal framework that support policy and related policy documents
October 2024	Section 5: included definitions to support the language within policy
October 2024	Section 7: Now includes all structure responsibilities directly involved in recruitment of students
October 2024	Section 13: Now includes how evaluation takes place
March 2025	Section 4: Amendment to paragraph on Criminal convictions
October 2025	Reviewed and dates changed in line with application year
October 2025	Any internal polices updated within document
October 2025	Link to new fees policy added

1. Introduction

This policy is applicable to all applicants applying for a full-time programme, substantial part time, or an apprenticeship programme starting in the academic year November 2024. It also applies to any students that are progressing internally within college e.g., Level 2 to Level 3 and will utilise the internal progression process and the principle of this policy still applies to them.

2. Policy Statement

The College welcomes applications from all prospective students with the motivation to learn and the potential to succeed. The College is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all individuals seeking a place on a programme. This policy outlines the process to be followed to ensure all applications are dealt with on an individual basis and are considered fairly.

3. Scope

This applications policy provides the framework for applications/admissions practice for all of the College programme of study and apprenticeships. The scope of this policy includes full-time and part-time further education programmes and apprenticeships offered by the College.

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This Policy is guided by the following legislation

- Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK
- Young person's guide to the Children and Families Act 2014 - GOV.UK
- Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK
- Data protection in schools - Guidance - GOV.UK
- Check if you need to tell someone about your criminal record: When you need to tell someone about your criminal record - GOV.UK

Related College policies, procedures and documents:

- Data-Protection-Privacy-Notice-College.pdf
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Fees Policy
- Compliments and complaints Policy

Criminal convictions

In accordance with our principles, the College ensures a fair and transparent decision-making process for all applications, including those from applicants declaring a criminal conviction. Applicants follow the standard admissions procedures, and if a conviction is declared, the **Safeguarding Team** will assess the potential risk before proceeding with the application process. This assessment includes liaising with the applicant to establish the nature of the conviction, ensuring both fairness and the safety of the college community.

5. Definitions

Higher Education (HE)

A higher education program is a course or qualification that takes place after secondary and further education and leads to a degree, diploma, or other qualification.

Further Education (FE)

A further education (FE) program is a course of study or training that takes place after secondary school but is not part of higher education.

Entry requirements

Entry requirements are the qualifications and other information that are required to be accepted into a course or program.

Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a paid job that combines on-the-job training with classroom-based learning to gain job-specific skills and a nationally recognized qualification.

Application

The application is a formal submission that a prospective student completes to gain admission to a college.

Admissions

Admission is the process of accepting students on to a course.

Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG)

A range of sessions that help people make informed decisions about their careers and education.

6. Policy Objectives

The College is committed to ensuring fair, transparent and consistent practices in the recruitment, selection and admission of students to all programmes offered by the College.

- The admissions process spans from pre-application stage up to and including enrolment and is crucial to establishing a positive relationship between applicants and the College.
- Entry requirement for each programme will be set out on the college website.
- The College is committed to meeting the needs of all prospective students wishing to undertake study at the College. This commitment is the key focus of the College's Vision and Values.
- The College values equality, diversity and inclusion and is committed to promoting equal opportunities and eliminating discrimination. The College will apply and administer this policy fairly and consistently to ensure there is no discrimination.
- The College retains its right to determine the suitability of applicants for enrolment onto a programme, providing this is based on relevant prior qualifications, skills, funding and/or safeguarding considerations.

- Funding mechanism may sometimes affect an applicant's ability to access a particular course. In this situation the College will investigate all legitimate opportunities, to ensure students can access provision, where appropriate.

7. Responsibilities

College Governors:

- Understanding and ensure effective compliance of the College FE Admissions Policy.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT):

- Approval of the College FE applications/admissions policy. Overseeing the effective implementation of the Admissions Policy.

Head of Student Experience:

- Effective implementation of the applications/admissions process.
- Monitoring applications, offers and acceptances throughout the admissions cycle.
- Monitoring admissions processes and liaising with Heads of Learning when elements within the process do not meet agreed timescales or quality standards.
- Oversight of admissions communications and interactions

Head of Apprenticeships:

- Ensure the effective implementation of the admissions process (managed by Apprenticeship team)
- Monitoring applications and offers.
- Monitoring processes and liaising with employers to ensure agreed timescales or quality standards are met.
- Oversight of communications and interactions, including enrolment.
- The College may be called upon by the employer, in the case of apprenticeships, to sift applicants and assist with the selection process. The decision to employ the applicant rests with the employer

Teaching and Learning Managers (TLMs) and Heads of Learning (HoLs):

- Adhere to the Admissions Policy
- Ensure programme information and course entry criteria that is in the public domain is up to date to ensure the applicant can make an informed decision and choices at relevant stages of the application.
- Exceptional entries (those that do not meet entry criteria) should complete this form and submit to Assistant Principal
- Ensure student recruitment events are regularly scheduled and staffed appropriately.
- Ensure that teaching staff make consistent admissions offers in line with the policy.
- Ensure all records are updated following student recruitment events.
- That the selection process is followed consistently and fairly and that transparent entry requirements, judgements are made during the selection process.
- Make applicants an offer that is reflective and appropriate and providing applicants with guidance when course entry criteria are not met providing an alternative offer in relation to their current academic and achievement levels.

- Monitor student numbers on programmes offered and make timely decisions on withdrawal of programmes due to low numbers.
- **N.B Ensure when courses are withdrawn that alternative programmes are offered to affected applicants.**

The Student Experience team:

- Address and respond to any course enquiries or applications from all existing and prospective students in a timely manner.
- Arrange Student recruitment events and relevant correspondence as part of the applications process.
- Provide applicants with offers and any conditions placed on them.
- Once an applicant has accepted a place on their chosen course, provide applicants with information about the arrangements for enrolment.

The applicant:

- Follow the College's procedures associated with the application process.
- Provide honest and accurate information and documentation about themselves for the college to provide informed advice regarding their programme and progression.
- Inform the college of any change in circumstances, personal details such as address or emergency details.
- Attend College events to support the transition to college.
- Confirm or decline their course offer.
- Attend induction and enrolment events/sessions and provide all requested information (evidence of qualifications, learner support needs, up to date personal information and finance, where applicable on to the Student Portal).

8. Procedures

All college offers will be "conditional or unconditional". The offer letters will outline the conditions of that need to be met to enrol on a course. Applicants will be asked to present evidence at enrolment that they have met all the "conditions" of their entry before they will be able to enrol on a course.

If we believe the course an applicant has applied to is not suitable for them, the student experience team will advise them from the following options:

- If the subject area is an appropriate choice, but the course level is not, then we will offer the applicant a conditional place on a lower or higher-level course within that same subject area.
- We may refer them to their second choice or a suggested alternative.
- We may refer them to either their school careers advisor or to the CIAG Team for further guidance.

If we cannot make an offer of a place to an applicant, further contact will be made to outline this and support with further information, advice and guidance.

The college will aim to ensure that applicants receive in writing the outcome of attendance to a student recruitment session/event within 10 working days. Applicants should respond within 10 working days, either accepting or declining their offer of a place in order to guarantee their place on the course.

Complaints Process

Applicants wishing to make a complaint or raise a concern about the application process should do so via the Complaints policy/procedure.

9. Training and Awareness

New staff undergo training on the college's application and admissions policy as part of their onboarding process. These sessions will cover core areas like eligibility criteria, application procedures, deadlines, documentation requirements, and decision-making protocols.

Since policies may evolve, annual refresher courses ensure all staff are up-to-date. These can be delivered in person or online, reviewing any updates in regulations, criteria, or application processing methods.

10. Monitoring and Review

The policy will be reviewed every year unless changes to internal procedures or legislation requires earlier review

- Feedback from applicants, staff and associated stakeholders, including parent, carers, employers and other organisations on the effectiveness of the policy and procedure.
- High levels of student recruitment, retention and positive destination data.
- Recognised successful achievement of external benchmarks and kite marking e.g., Matrix Standard accreditation and Gatsby Career Benchmark.

11. Confidentiality/Record keeping

All applicant data is securely saved within identified college systems. Records will be kept in our system in-line with funding regulations and GDPR. For students who are aged 16 – 19 (or with an EHCP) then we share application data and enrolment data with the student's current education provider, or nominated local education area, to support them meeting legal requirements on reporting engagement in education figures. This includes name, date of birth and either the course you have applied for and current stage, or the course you have enrolled on. In applying for an apprenticeship then you are agreeing to us sharing your CV with potential employers that you have identified you would like to apply for a position with.

For any further information in relation to your data please refer to our GDPR policy as stated above.

12. Communication

- Policy Dissemination – The application policy is available to all staff, students, parents/carers and stakeholders on the college website and provided to all new staff as part of their induction.
- Annual Updates - Annual updates are provided to staff through staff development days, In the Loop, emails and online training. Reports are provided to Governors and Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

13. Evaluation and Reporting

Application Conversion Rates: Track the number of applications received and the conversion rate to actual enrolments. A high conversion rate often indicates effective admissions processes and policy alignment with student expectations.

Diversity and Inclusion: Assess the diversity of the student population in terms of categories such as disability, ethnicity, gender. Socio economic backgrounds. This helps determine if the policy is promoting equal opportunities and eliminating discrimination.

Student Feedback: Collect feedback from applicants and newly enrolled students about their experience with the application process through surveys, focus groups or interviews.

Completion and Retention Rates: Measure the retention rates of students from application through to completion of their courses. High retention and completion rates suggest that the admissions and IAG process is selecting students who are well-suited to the programme.

Processing Time: Track the average time from application submission to decision notification. Shorter processing times reflect efficient policy implementation, while delays may indicate bottlenecks or areas for process improvement.

Compliance with Policies: Regular audits will be held of random samples of applications to assess whether staff are following policy guidelines accurately.

14. Review and Amendment History

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains compliant with current legislation and is still effective.

15. Approval

Approved by Assistant Principal. Signed off by Principal or Chief Operating Officer.

EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT ADMISSION WITHOUT COURSE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS (2025-26)

In exceptional circumstances, a student maybe admitted onto a programme of study where they fail to meet the published entry requirements. The Assistant Principal (Student Experience, Progression and HE) must be satisfied that the applicant demonstrates equivalent skills and knowledge, which are sufficient to meet the demands of the programme of study. A recommendation for enrolment must be provided by the programme leader and agreed by their curriculum manager/head of department using the form below. Please ensure all sections are fully completed so that a quick response can be provided. Thank you.

STUDENT REF:		SECTION:	

EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT ADMISSION WITHOUT COURSE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

APPLICANT'S DETAILS

APPLICANT'S LAST NAME	
APPLICANT'S FIRST NAME(S)	

PROGRAMME OF STUDY DETAILS

PROGRAMME TITLE COURSE CODE PLEASE LIST ALL QUALIFICATIONS AND THEIR LEVEL THAT THE STUDENT IS TO BE ENROLLED ON	

PERIOD OF STUDY

START DATE (DD/MM/YYYY):	END DATE (DD/MM/YYYY):

PLEASE ENTER HERE THE PUBLISHED ENTRY CRITERIA FOR THE PROGRAMME OF STUDY:	PLEASE ENTER HERE THE PRIOR ATTAINMENT OF APPLICANT:

RATIONALE FOR OFFER (The programme leader should state their reason(s) for wishing to offer the applicant a place on the course, despite their not meeting the entry criteria).

Student's intended progression route

Please add details below of the student's intended progression route from the programme they are currently seeking entrance onto. What are the entrance requirements for this progression route and will the student be able to achieve these in the coming year in order to allow progression to take place.

SIGNATURE OF PROGRAMME LEADER:

SIGNATURE			
NAME		DATE	

SIGNATURE OF MANAGER:

SIGNATURE			
NAME		DATE	

The programme leader has discussed this applicant's suitability for the above programme with me and I confirm that admission onto the specified programme of study is acceptable.

Completed forms should be sent to Samantha Rooney (Samantha.rooney@iwcollege.ac.uk) for final approval.