



**Cheshire College  
South & West**

## **HE Admissions Policy**

Key Information	
Policy Reference Number	CCSW - HEAP
ELT Post Responsible for Update and Monitoring	Vice Principal – Innovation, Curriculum and Quality
Published on Website	Yes
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Date Approved by Governor's Committee (if applicable)	14 October 2024
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## 1. Context

- 1.1 Cheshire College South and West (*the College*) believes that individuals should be encouraged to participate in the education process throughout life and to the highest level of their ability. This is central to the College's purpose of nurturing talent and empowering people to achieve their full potential. Therefore, the College is committed to enhancing access to its higher education courses through the continued development of local provision, flexibility in course design and delivery, recognition of work based and prior learning and collaboration with external partners in the development and delivery of higher education courses. The College believes that recruitment and admission to courses should reflect all groups in society able and eligible to participate and recognises the importance of the recruitment and selection process in achieving this. The College is resolute in the view that the potential to study successfully draws from a range of academic and other attainments, motivation and commitment and that course-based selection and admissions criteria should reflect this.
- 1.2 This admissions policy is applicable to all Higher Education programmes at Cheshire College South and West and to all types of students, including applicants to Higher National Certificates and Diplomas, Degree programmes and higher-level professional courses.
- 1.3 The College's Higher Education admissions policy and processes are governed and managed through the following:
  - 1.3.1 **Curriculum and Quality Committee**, chaired by an external governor and including representation from the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The admissions policy is approved by this committee.
  - 1.3.2 **Higher Education Academic Board**, chaired by the Director of Higher Technical Education-and including representation from the ELT and SLT.
  - 1.3.3 **Applications, Conversions and Enrolments Working Group**, chaired by the Deputy Principal and CEO and including representation from the ELT and SLT. This group is responsible for the development, implementation and review of the College's recruitment and admissions strategy.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 This policy takes into account the sector agreed principles ~~guidelines~~ within the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education (as revised), with specific regard to Principle 9 – Recruiting, Selecting and admitting students. It is also underpinned by relevant legislation and statutory guidance.
- 2.2 This policy will not discriminate either directly or indirectly against any individual on the grounds of gender, race, ethnicity or nationality, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or belief, age, disability, socio-economic status or any other personal characteristic.

## 3. Admissions Policy Statement

- 3.1 The College operates a policy of responsible recruitment and undertakes to ensure that promotional material accurately reflects the College's courses and facilities.
- 3.2 The procedures for the admission of learners are non-discriminatory and reflect the College's commitment to equal opportunities.
- 3.3 The College will not admit applicants unless there is a reasonable expectation that the applicant can fulfil the learning outcomes of the course and reach the required standard for the award.
- 3.4 Responsibility for the selection of learners lies with the Course Team Leader, under direction the Director of Higher Technical Education, operating within the general entry requirements for the qualification and any specific course-based requirements. Where the course is offered in partnership with one of the College's partner Universities, the final responsibility for the selection of learners lies with the partner University.
- 3.5 The admission of learners with disabilities and/or learning difficulties is based on the academic judgement that the learner can, with reasonable adjustments by the College, be reasonably expected to fulfil the learning outcomes of the course to achieve the award.

#### **4. General Admissions Practice**

- 4.1 The admissions process will pay due regard to the College's responsibilities to minimise fraud, to protect the health and safety of its staff and learners and to meet its legal obligations in relation to human rights, freedom of information, data protection and discrimination of any kind. To this end, the College will operate procedures that are fair to all applicants regardless of age, background, disability, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or gender reassignment.
- 4.2 The College encourages applications from anyone seeking to gain higher level qualifications relevant to his/her/their needs, and in addition recognises a special responsibility towards those:
- 4.3.1 who for domestic, cultural, physical or other reasons need to come to this College;
  - 4.3.2 who are seeking to re-enter the education system after a period away from study;
  - 4.3.3 who have accreditable alternative experience in lieu of standard entry requirements; and
  - 4.3.4 Who are applicants from under-represented groups in Higher and Further Education
- 4.3 Applications should be made directly to the College via the College's website: [How to apply - Cheshire College South & West \(ccsw.ac.uk\)](https://www.ccs.ac.uk)
- 4.4 Applications will be received and processed by the College's Admissions team. The Admissions team are responsible for creating and updating the applicant record on the College's ProSolution system.
- 4.5 All applicants will be invited into the College for an interview as part of the College's normal admissions events schedule. The Director of Higher Technical Education will liaise with the Admissions team and curriculum Assistant Directors to ensure all interviews are completed in a timely manner and all applicants have a HE interview record completed and returned to Admissions.
- 4.6 Formal correspondence with successful applicants will be sent from the College's Admissions team and will include a copy of the signed Higher Education interview record, a letter detailing the offer and any conditions of the offer, a form for completion and return to provisionally accept the offer and a copy of the College's Higher Education Learner Contract which outlines the terms and conditions of provisionally accepting the offer.
- 4.7 Offers will normally only be made for courses which have been approved through the College's Course Approval process and/or partner University approval and validation process. If, in exceptional circumstances, an offer is made for a course which is at pre-approval stage, the offer must state that it is subject to the course being approved and/or validated and make clear when such approval is expected and what the consequences will be if approval is not granted.
- 4.8 The College will do all that it reasonably can to deliver courses in accordance with the terms of the offers made to applicants. In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to discontinue a course or to make significant changes to a course between the time an offer is made and enrolment, in which case the Director of Higher Technical Education will contact the applicant and advise them of the options available. Particular attention will be paid to the applicant's needs in such circumstances, as it is not always possible for them to secure an alternative offer, in which case the applicant will be directed to the College's Refund and Compensation Policy.
- 4.9 The Director of Higher Technical Education will monitor successful and unsuccessful applications to ensure equality and consistency and will liaise with Course Team Leaders to clarify atypical decisions.
- 4.10 Enquirers are encouraged to visit the appropriate campus, and to facilitate this the College operates a number of Open Days throughout the year on each of its campuses.

#### **5. Entry Requirements**

- 5.1 The College considers a range and combination of qualifications, experiential and certificated professional learning, for its entry requirements. Academic entry criteria are set by the Director of Higher Technical Education and course teams, taking into account relevant professional, statutory and regulatory body criteria and are reviewed on an annual basis. For courses offered in conjunction with its partner universities, the entry requirements are established by the relevant partner university.

- 5.2 Information on content of courses, entry requirements and processes such as interview, audition or portfolio, requirements for criminal record checks (DBS) and Fitness to Practise are listed on the College website.
- 5.3 Undergraduate applicants are generally expected to have 5 GCSE passes at C or above including Maths and English, or equivalent i.e., Key Skills Level 3 or Functional Skills Level 2. The College requires learners to achieve GCSE Grade 4 (*C grade*) or above. However, if the subject is relevant to a degree programme and requires a higher GCSE grade (e.g., *GCSE B grade*), and/or includes a Professional body that governs the entry requirements, Grade 5 or above may be required.
- 5.4 For mature applicants, decision making on levels of literacy and numeracy can be based on the whole profile/contextual data on their application.
- 5.5 All courses are taught in English; all applicants must have sufficient competency in the English language to study successfully for the proposed award. Minimum English language requirements are detailed in each course's entry requirements
- 5.6 There are recognised progression routes for advanced entry from qualifications such as Foundation degrees.
- 5.7 Courses leading to professional recognition or awards offered by external awarding authorities may place additional entry requirements on applicants. These will be detailed on the College's website and in course literature.

## **6. Proof of Qualifications**

- 6.1 All applicants will be asked to provide evidence of the academic qualifications as listed on their application form. Applicants will be given a deadline date to send in their evidence, which will usually be by the enrolment date.
- 6.2 All qualifications will be checked against the application form as soon as the evidence is provided. Where the course is offered in conjunction with a partner University, the Admissions team will send a copy of the applicant's qualifications to the partner University.
- 6.3 If no evidence is provided by the deadline given, a 'Hold' will be put on the applicant's electronic record, so they cannot enrol as a learner. The Hold will only be taken off the record when the evidence has been provided and matched to the application form. Applicants will be advised that prolonged delay may jeopardise their offer on the course and they may be advised to defer their enrolment to the next intake opportunity.
- 6.4 If it is found that an applicant has wilfully or negligently misrepresented their qualifications or other information in their application form, the offer may be withdrawn and the applicant's contract with, and membership of, the College may be terminated. In the case of applicants to courses provided by partner Universities, the University will be informed and the decision to terminate the applicant's enrolment will be determined by them.

## **7. Selection Procedures**

- 7.1 All applicants will receive an advisory interview.
- 7.2 The interview will consider any/all of the following:
  - 7.2.1 applicants with alternative qualifications;
  - 7.2.2 applicants with experiential learning;
  - 7.2.3 applicants with significant disabilities and/or learning difficulties (the Course Team Leader may invite to the interview or refer the applicant to a specialist member of the learning support team for further advice and guidance on the applicant's needs);
  - 7.2.4 special or unusual factors disclosed in application; and
  - 7.2.5 a portfolio or audition, where it is part of the selection process
- 7.3 The College will not admit applicants unless there is a reasonable expectation that the applicant can fulfil the learning outcomes of the course and reach the required standard for the award.
- 7.4 Applicants who are unsuccessful in their first-choice course will be contacted and, wherever possible, an

appropriate alternative course will be offered. Where an alternative course cannot be offered, the applicant will be given further advice and guidance.

- 7.5 There is no right of appeal against a decision not to admit an applicant onto a particular course. However, applicants are entitled to know the reason(s) for their non-selection and to discuss these with the Director of Higher Technical Education.

## **8. Admission of Learners with Criminal Convictions**

- 8.1 Having a criminal conviction will not necessarily prevent someone from studying at the College; this will depend on the nature of the course and the circumstances and background of the offences.
- 8.2 The College complies fully with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly. Any information about an applicant's criminal convictions will be disclosed only to those people who need to see it as part of the admissions process.
- 8.3 A declaration of all criminal convictions is a requirement for courses where the final award also confers a licence to practise in a profession where certain types of crime, or any criminal record, could prevent a licence being granted, or where a DBS check is required because the course involves close working with either children or vulnerable adults. In such cases, the criteria are explained in course literature and at the interview. Applicants for these courses require a DBS check. The Course Team Leader is responsible for ensuring that procedures are in place for the consideration of convictions in line with professional body requirements, under direction from the Director of Higher Technical Education.
- 8.4 Franchised courses are subject to partnership processes and regulation which will be followed for any admission of a criminal conviction.
- 8.5 For non-franchised provision ~~the Dean of Higher Education~~ The Director of Higher Technical Education is responsible for convening a review meeting within 10 working days of the criminal conviction being known to the College. Attendees to include at least:
- 8.5.1 the Director of Higher Technical Education;
  - 8.5.2 the Assistant Principal responsible for the curriculum area concerned;
  - 8.5.3 the Colleges' Designated Senior Leader.
- 8.6 Applicants who declare a criminal conviction will not be automatically excluded from the application process. However, in line with the Criminal Convictions Procedure, the Assistant Principal of Learning and Learner Services may ask for more information before deciding.

## **9. Admissions of Learners with a Disability and/or Learning Difficulty**

- 9.1 The College will comply fully with the UK Equality Act 2010, ensuring that the admissions policy is applied fairly and without discrimination, either direct discrimination or that arising from an applicant's disability.
- 9.2 Admission to a course is based on the academic judgement that the learner can, with reasonable adjustments by the College, be reasonably expected to fulfil the learning outcomes of the course to achieve the award.
- 9.3 Applicants are strongly encouraged to disclose disability related information within the application process and/or at the interview. Failure to do so may mean the College cannot put appropriate support arrangements into place for the start of the course.
- 9.4 The College may require further information from the applicant regarding anticipated support needs in order that a considered judgement can be made.

## **10. Complaints Procedure**

- 10.1 Applicants who wish to complain about the operation of the College's admissions process should be directed to the College's Complaints Procedure, which is available on the College's website.

## **11. Applicants' Personal Data**

- 11.1 The College takes privacy of personal information seriously and is committed to being transparent about how information is collected and used.
- 11.2 The College sets out how it complies with its obligations under the UK Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (*UK GDPR*) in its [Data Protection Policy](#) and [Data Protection Rights Procedure](#).