

ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

DOCUMENT CONTROL			
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Date created/updated:	6 Sept 2016	Review Date:	1 Sept 2017
Approval Need by SLT:	Yes	Date Approved:	20/09/16
Approval Need by Governors:	No	Date Approved:	
Approval Need by Unions:	No	Date Approved:	
Impact Assessment Date*:	Sept 16	Job Title of Assessor:	GVP Qual & Cur
Audience:	Staff: Yes	Students: Yes	Public: Yes
<i>If approval is not required by SLT/Governors/Unions please give reason, i.e. name changes only.</i>			
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1. AIMS

This policy applies to all applicants to the Shrewsbury Colleges Group (SCG) applying for Further Education courses.

We encompass all aspects of the UK Quality Code in our Admissions processes. (*A separate policy exists for Higher Education programmes.*)

This policy is to be used in conjunction with the *Single Equality Scheme*, the *Student Criminal Convictions Policy* and the *Student DBS Policy*.

This policy will be consistent with key messages in the Group's prospectuses, course leaflets, websites and all other marketing material.

1.1 Statement of Principles

- I. Policies and procedures used to admit students are clear, fair, explicit and consistently applied
- II. Fair, effective and timely procedures exist for handling students' complaints and appeals
- III. All offers of places on courses are conditional and subject to the Group being able to meet each learner's individual support and programme needs.

1.2 Equality and Diversity

- I. The Group is committed to ensuring that the admissions process is open and transparent and that no individual or group receives less favourable treatment by virtue of age, disability, economic status, faith, gender, marital status, sexuality, race, colour, and nationality including citizenship, ethnic or national origin
- II. At all times, the SCG will consider and adhere to their commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in line with the Single Equality Scheme.

2. PROGRAMME EXPECTATIONS**2.1 What you can expect from us:****TIMESCALES**

- I. Applications are received online via the Colleges' websites and an automatic acknowledgment of receipt is sent
- II. Applicants will hear from the Admissions Team within 2 weeks of receipt of application about the next stage / date of interview

A LEVEL PROGRAMMES –

- I. Only available as full-time study for those aged 16-18
- II. Students are admitted to study programmes of normally 3, occasionally 4, and exceptionally 5 advanced level subjects. There are additional extension and enrichment activities e.g. extended project, sport, music and dramatic arts or work related activities
- III. Some students will be recommended to attend "Flying start", where additional support may be required

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VOCATIONAL / DIPLOMA PROGRAMMES –

- I. Students will be advised on what level diploma to start at, depending on previous qualifications, experience and industry specific requirements
- II. Some students studying on a Level 3 Diploma may have the option of also studying an A level alongside (see websites for possible combinations)

ENGLISH AND MATHS GCSE REQUIREMENTS (ALL STUDENTS)

- I. Where students, aged 16-18, have not gained a grade C in Maths or English GCSE they must continue to work towards English and/or Maths GCSE until they have achieved a grade C in both subjects.

2.2. What we expect from you:

- I. Applicants are responsible for providing accurate information at all stages of the application process. Any student found to be providing fraudulent or false information will have any offer made withdrawn
- II. Applicants should inform the College directly if they decide to withdraw from the offer
- III. It is expected that applicants will accept or decline an offer of a place at the College within 2 weeks of the offer being made
- IV. Applicants must provide information at application or enrolment stage, regarding their care circumstances and declare criminal convictions – See Appendix A
- V. Applicants should inform the College about any additional learning support needs or medical conditions
- VI. Students must treat all Group staff respectfully
- VII. Once enrolled all students will agree to follow all Group policies and procedures.

3. CRITERIA FOR OFFERING PLACES**3.1 Factors to consider are:**

- I. The applicant should be committed to continuing with their education and in agreement with the programme expectations
- II. The applicant should meet the entry requirements for their chosen course. (Entry criteria for vocational courses may be waived at the discretion of the tutor, particularly where experience may be deemed to stand in place of certification)
- III. Their application should be supported by their present educational institution or details provided for a suitable referee
- IV. There should be evidence that the applicant can reasonably be expected to achieve and will be capable of working independently
- V. The course/s offered should be appropriate for the student and be at a higher level than previously achieved in most cases
- VI. Where students are assessed to have a high level of need and support, then all parties must be assured that the appropriate level of support can be provided and funded in college where SEND applies and EHCP is required
- VII. Offers for Apprenticeships require both the employer and the College to make an offer. Offers can be declined if the literacy and numeracy assessments do not demonstrate ability to complete the framework. Appropriate advice and guidance will be offered to provide suitable options towards an Apprenticeship

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- VIII. Admission is subject to places on courses being available. Places on courses will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis, provided that the course entry criteria are met. Under exceptional circumstances the Principal reserves the right to approve amended arrangements
- IX. SCG reserve the right to withdraw an offer or close a course if there are insufficient student numbers. We will inform applicants as soon as possible and offer a suitable alternative
- X. SCG reserve the right not to admit a student who has any outstanding debts to the Colleges
- XI. SCG reserve the right to decline an application from any applicant who has previously been involved in the SCG disciplinary process

3.2 Students who wish to re-start or to re-enrol having not completed the course/or achieved pass grades

These students will be considered on a case by case basis. Re-enrolment is not automatic. Students must complete an application form and be interviewed.

Students may have specific conditions placed on their re-application which they must meet, for example a certain level of attendance. They also may need to demonstrate their suitability for further study at interview. A course contract will be agreed with the student and placed on ProMonitor

The assumption is that students who wish to re-start at the same level having achieved sufficient pass grades to progress will not be re-enrolled.

3.3 Applicants transferring from another institution

We will consider any external applications on an individual basis. Entry is dependent on there being sufficient room in classes and would be subject to satisfactory references including comments on performance and attendance from applicant's previous institution. We would also need to be assured that progression to our syllabus would be practical in terms of successful outcomes for the student.

4. TUITION FEES

In order for a student to be eligible for funding of their learning programme, the learner must have the legal right to be resident in the UK at the start of the programme (See Appendix B International students)

Students will be informed of any additional fees before enrolment

Details of fees can be found on the websites or by ringing Admissions at either College

Students in the following categories **will not** be charged tuition fees on full-time programmes:

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- I. aged 16 to 18 (as on 1st September of year of enrolment)
- II. Under 16 but have completed key stage 4 and with a British or EU passport.
- III. Students in either category must meet the residency criteria outlined in Appendix B to receive free tuition

(Please refer to the Fees Policy for current funding criteria and costs)

5. APPLICANTS WITH HEALTH, DISABILITY AND/OR ADDITIONAL LEARNING SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Additional Learning Support is a service that is provided to help learners who have disclosed a disability, learning difficulty or medical condition. We aim to remove any potential barriers to learning to ensure that learners develop their personal skills and confidence and become as independent as possible in their learning and achieve their learning goals, personal goals and employment ambitions.

- I. The framework for the SEND policy is provided by: The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, The Children and Families Act 2014, The Education Act 1996, The Single Equality Scheme 2013-16 and The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014. Changes in policy or practice will be updated as new legislation emerges.

5.2 Assessment - The Colleges will help applicants with learning difficulties/disabilities by assessing their learning needs and providing additional support where appropriate.

- I. An Individual Support Requirements Form - provides an opportunity for applicants to disclose any disability or learning difficulty requiring special consideration or support. This includes identifying any support currently in place.
- II. Applicants are also provided with the facility to let the College know about any help they are likely to need i.e. by talking confidentially to a member of staff at an advice event, by telephone or in writing, or through someone else such as an advocate, parent or carer who can accompany the applicant.
- III. Any student who declares a learning difficulty or disability at application, enrolment or during the course will be entitled to an assessment of needs with a suitably qualified member of staff. An Individual Support Plan is agreed, signed and progress records kept. Recommendations are discussed with the student and tutors and all responsibilities are agreed. The plan will be reviewed and amended throughout the course as students work towards independent learning.

5.3 Applicants are asked to inform us at application stage if they are **looked after by a local authority** so we are aware should any additional support be necessary.

5.4 Fitness to study -

- I. We aim to support students' learning and academic achievements and will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to enable students to access their course of study that is considered to be appropriate to their disability, learning difficulty or physical and mental ill-health. It may also apply when a student's condition compromises their safety or the safety of others whilst participating in a work placement or other off site activity.

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- II. We provide a range of services to support students during the application and enrolment process and their time at college, for example:
 - The Counselling Service/ Health and Wellbeing Services
 - Learning Support
 - Careers and Employability Team
 - Welfare/ Safeguarding Team
- III. We recognise that each case will be different and may require liaison with the student, parents or carers and internal and external agencies in order to reach a decision. The agreement reached in each case will differ according to the circumstances and the advice received from medical practitioners and other external experts
- IV. The following are examples of when it is appropriate to consider reasonable adjustments:
 - Where students are affected by conditions that require long periods of absence and treatment
 - Where participation in an assessment or other course related activity would jeopardise the long term health and wellbeing of the student due to an existing medical condition.
 - Where there are doubts from staff over the student's fitness to study in the college and/or within their placement because of an existing medical condition.
 - Where we consider the ability to study to be neither manageable nor achievable in relation to specific tasks or activities because of an existing condition. It may be necessary to consider awarding body criteria and the ability to study in order to complete assessments/ assignments.
 - When there is disruption to teaching, learning and support of other students not otherwise covered by the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures or where unreasonable demands are being made on staff or students.
 - Where there is a risk to self and others because of an existing condition.

6. APPEALS PROCESS

Applicants have the right to appeal against any decision taken during the application process. Appeals are made to the Group Vice Principal, Curriculum Support & Business Development. However any appeals made against a decision made by them will be referred to the Principal.

An Admissions Appeal could be invoked or referred to for a variety of reasons including:

- I. If an applicant who has previously been withdrawn/excluded from a College course wishes to return.
- II. If a Tutor has reasonable grounds for believing that an application may require a risk assessment, for example, any behaviour or previous record which could pose a threat to staff or other students.
- III. If an applicant or an applicant's representative wishes to appeal against the decision made as a result of an interview.
- IV. If an applicant presents an unacceptable Safeguarding risk.

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This list is not exhaustive or exclusive and situations may arise which necessitate an Admissions Appeal.

7 RELATED POLICIES

- *Higher Education Admissions Policy*
- *Student Criminal Convictions Policy*
- *Student DBS Policy*
- *Student Policy for Additional Support*
- *SEND Policy*
- *Fees Policy*

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APPENDIX A CRITERIA FOR ENROLLING STUDENTS TO SPECIFIC COURSES

1. Students need to meet the minimum entry requirements for the level of course. See College websites and prospectus for general entry requirements for full-time programmes
2. Students will be advised at interview to choose courses and therefore a programme which has a clear rationale - (including career plans). Where students can demonstrate a convincing rationale at interview and enrolment this will support the student's wishes to enrol on the courses that make up the programme.
3. Interviewers may record during the interview process evidence of research into the course and the student's knowledge/understanding/expectations. Where there is evidence of sound research, a basic understanding and realistic expectations this will support the student's wishes to enrol on the course.
4. Where student demand for places on specific courses is greater than the spaces available then staff will make judgements based on the above criteria. Where students are not offered places on particular courses they will be informed of the underlying rationale if required. Students will have the opportunity to pursue their case through the Appeals Procedure.
5. The Group has a Student DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Policy as courses in the following areas require DBS clearance:
 - Childcare
 - Health and Social Care
 - Education
 - Some Public Services and SportsAny other course that requires students to work with children or vulnerable adults
 - The DBS process will be explained to the applicant and the College will be responsible for checking the identity of the applicant prior to the DBS application form being submitted. If the DBS check discloses information of concern the College will discuss the appropriate next steps with each applicant. This could be a change of course, seeking appropriate references or withdrawal of the offer of a place.
 - The Group has the right to refuse any application it considers inappropriate relating to subject choice and history. Any applications received that raise concern will be discussed and a response will be made to the applicant.
 - Any student that is refused a place at College will have the right of Appeal to the Group Vice Principal, Curriculum Support and Business Development within 5 days.
6. All applicants will be written to individually to confirm their enrolment date and time. All students enrolling must sign a copy of the Learner Agreement. All students are expected to attend the College Pre Enrolment/Enrolment Days which provide the opportunity to find out about chosen courses, College life and support available.
7. As a matter of policy the Group monitors the demand for courses in terms of overall numbers, gender and school of origin.

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APPENDIX B INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

1. Applications from International students are welcomed.
2. We are a TIER 4 SPONSOR licenced by the Home Office to sponsor international students who want to study with us. We can issue Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) for Tier 4 (General) visas.
3. Please refer to the student guidance notes on the UKCISA website (fees and student support available at <http://www.ukcisa.org.uk>) to help you assess your fee status.
4. Fees for one academic year must be paid in advance, and a letter of Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) which is necessary in order to obtain/renew a Tier 4 student visa, will NOT be issued until fees have been paid or documentary evidence produced confirming that you have a Government award or scholarship.
5. Student tuition fees for non EU international students will be published on the website and are available from Admissions team each year. Non UK students will also be required to have their qualifications compared to UK qualifications via the UK NARIC website (www.naric.org.uk)
6. Prospective (non EU) international students should look at the other information that is available on the Colleges' website in the International section/s
7. Notes on Residency - The following persons will be eligible for funding, namely:
 - A person on the 1 September of the academic year of enrolment who is 'settled' in the UK, and who has been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands (that is including the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man) for the three years preceding the 1 September of the academic year of enrolment, and whose main purpose for such residence was not to receive full-time education during any part of the three-year period.
 - 'Settled' means having either indefinite leave to enter or remain (ILE/R) or having the right of abode in the UK.
 - British citizens and certain other people have the right of abode in the UK:
 - those with European Community–United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland passports;
 - British Dependent Territory Citizens (now known as British Overseas Territory Citizens);
 - those whose passports have been endorsed to show they have right of abode in the UK;
 - those who have a certificate of naturalisation or registration as a British citizen.
 - A national of any European Union (EU) country or the spouse, civil partner or child of an EU national who has been ordinarily resident in the European Economic Area (EEA) for the three years preceding the 1 September of the academic year of enrolment.
 - An EEA migrant worker or the spouse, civil partner or child of an EEA migrant worker who has been ordinarily resident in the EEA for the three years preceding the 1 September of the academic year of enrolment.
 - Anyone who is recognised as a refugee by the UK Government (granted refugee status) who has remained ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands since being so recognised, or the spouse or civil partner or child of such a refugee.
 - Anyone refused refugee status but who has been granted leave to stay by the Secretary of State, granted humanitarian protection (HP) or discretionary leave (DL), or was granted exceptional leave to enter or remain (ELE/ELR) by the UK Government, and who has remained ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands since being so recognised, or the spouse, civil partner or child of such a person.
 - Learners studying under reciprocal exchange agreements.