

Admissions Policy



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Contact	Director of Services for Students
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Admissions Policy

1 Introduction

Waltham Forest College's mission statement reads, "Deliver responsive, outstanding teaching, learning and support to meet the needs of individuals and employers and inspire our students to develop the high quality skills and knowledge they need to be successful in their future lives". The Admissions Policy also supports the delivery of the College's strategic aims.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students have equal access to apply and be considered for college courses, which include apprenticeships and work-based training and have access to high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance.

2 Scope

Waltham Forest College offers all students access to high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance throughout the admissions process, whilst ensuring all applicants are well supported to make an informed decision on selecting the right course at the right level.

Staff providing careers guidance are well trained to support applicants through the admissions process.

3 Responsibility for implementation

This policy applies to all staff that are involved in providing high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance to progressing and new students throughout the student recruitment, teaching, learning and assessment process.

4 Objectives

The College operates an admissions policy and process, which is:

- Easy to use and understand
- Client centred
- Consistent with the matrix standards
- Impartial and operates within the equality scheme
- Assists with the retention and achievement of students

5 Procedure/Implementation of Policy

This section provides the detail and the high-level procedures to implement the Admissions Policy.

5.1 Full-Time Applicants

Responsibility for co-ordinating applications and admissions to full-time programmes rests with Student Services. Student Services will ensure that:

- Requests for application forms are sent on the day of request
- Applications are input onto the MIS database within 3 days of receipt
- Appropriate arrangements are made for interviews and initial assessments
- Applicants are informed of interview arrangements within one working week of receipt of the application form
- All relevant information, including risk assessments and transition plans for those in receipt of any form of care, supervision or who have special needs e.g. visual impairment, an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) is to be provided before an application can progress to enrolment. This is to ensure that appropriate and timely support can be put in place before entry onto a course
- All applicants aged 16-18 are aware of the mandatory requirement to study Maths and English until a grade A*-C or 9-4 at GCSE is achieved
- All applicants aged 16-18 are aware of the requirement to undertake Work Experience or a Work Related Placement
- All applicants for full time courses will be interviewed. Most interviews will be conducted at scheduled interview events
- Responsibility for confirming staff availability for interview rests with Learning Managers
- Co-ordination of interview times, initial assessments and invitations to prospective students for interview rests with Student Services
- For those students who would like to access the impartial careers advice service and discuss careers options, an interview will be arranged with an appropriate Careers Adviser. Once a vocational path has been selected, a further interview will be arranged with the relevant member of teaching staff within the learning area

To ensure applicants are offered suitable courses the following will be taken into account:

- Abilities of the applicant using, as necessary, initial assessment, predicted grades, school reports and school reference. Upon enrolment, actual achievements will be obtained with students' permission, from the Government's Learner Record Service portal
- Career/Higher Education aspirations of the applicant
- The learning needs of the applicant
- The skills, experience and interests of the applicant
- The previous performance, conduct and achievement on College run courses – in a minority of cases this may be a course at the same level but in a different discipline
- Information included within risk assessments, transition and support plans
- The point in year when the student is applying with regard to their ability to complete the programme of study and their progression intentions
- The applicant's ability to pay fees should the student not be eligible for funding in line with current funding guidelines

Student Services will make every effort to ensure that:

- The career needs of the applicant are met in a way that is consistent with the College's curriculum offer and within available funding sources
- Applicants are given full information about the College, the courses for which they have applied and progression opportunities which include routes to employment, apprenticeships and university

- Applicants are selected in accordance with the entry requirements for the course for which they have applied
- Applicants in receipt of care services will be considered fairly, appropriate risk assessments will be undertaken and support plans will be put in place
- The application process and the selection of applicants is conducted in compliance with the College's Equality Scheme
- The results of an interview will usually be communicated in the form of a conditional/unconditional offer at the end of the interview or, in writing to the applicant as soon as is reasonably possible after the interview has taken place
- All students offered places will be invited to the College to formally enrol and attend their induction session
- Financial advice will be offered in relation to information about fees and entitlement to fee remission or sources of support e.g. Bursaries and loans
- Information will be available on support that may be available from the College such as with travel, childcare and other related course costs
- All students will be offered the opportunity of further careers information, advice and guidance should they wish to reconsider their course choice

5.2 Part-Time Applicants

Responsibility for processing of part-time applications and enrolments rests with Student Services.

In addition:

- Interviews with specialist tutors will be held for admission to some accredited courses. This will include initial assessments and checking of prior qualifications and/or experience as part of the entry criteria
- Supported learning students and those with special needs will be advised on appropriate courses to meet their needs and aspirations by specialist advisers and tutors
- Part-time applicants for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses are required to take a short test and interview to assess their level and offered a suitable course
- Other courses may have specific diagnostic assessment to be undertaken

All applicants to part-time courses will be offered high-quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance to ensure they are enrolled on appropriate courses.

Employers expressing interest in training for their employees will be provided with an opportunity to discuss their requirements prior to training needs analysis being undertaken.

5.3 Employer Engagement

The College provides a comprehensive service to employers and offers a range of training provision including Training Needs Analyses. Employers can elect for their employees to attend existing full-time/part-time programmes or discuss bespoke training, which can be delivered either at College or off-site on employer premises.

Employers and apprentices will be advised and will receive guidance on accredited provision, fees payable as well as information on Apprenticeships and NVQs in the Workplace.

5.4 Higher Education Applications

All applicants will be invited for interview, including those received via UCAS.

If an applicant does not hold formal Level 3 qualifications, admission to a Level 4/5 (HNC/HND) programme may be subject to successful completion of specific tasks, portfolio examination and/or interview with a curriculum specialist.

Advice on funding for tuition fees and the student maintenance loan, subject to current funding rules, will be given as part of the interview process. If an offer is made, all candidates will be supported in the Student Finance England application process, so that this is in place for the start of the course.

6 Conditions of Entry

Entry requirements are in place for all courses to ensure that the applicants are supported to make fully informed choices. Waltham Forest College offers fair and transparent conditions of entry system. Entry criteria is clearly published in all course information sheets, the prospectus and the College website.

In cases where achievement of specific grades are required to secure a place, this will be discussed in detail at the course interview. In cases where awarding bodies or other stakeholders have entry requirements in addition to college criteria this will also be clearly stated on the course information sheet.

7 All Students

- 7.1 All applicants will be provided with high-quality impartial, career information, advice and guidance to assist them in finding a suitable course to meet their needs. In some cases when provided with all relevant information it may be determined that enrolment at Waltham Forest College may not be appropriate. It is expected that this will be in a minority of cases.
- 7.2 Applicants to courses which involve contact with children or vulnerable adults, will be required to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Applicants will be notified at interview if a DBS check is required and completed forms and payment must be received before the application can proceed to enrolment. Where the DBS check indicates the applicant has a history of one or more offences, they may be refused entry to the course and alternative pathways will be suggested by the College.
- 7.3 Applicants for all courses are requested to disclose unspent criminal convictions or pending court cases during the application, interview and enrolment stage. The nature of the conviction will be considered through an internal risk assessment and the College will liaise with external agencies to ensure a decision is made that considers the security and safety of the learner, staff, other learners and visitors to the College. It may also impact on suitability for some career pathways, e.g. those in Public Services.

- 7.4 All applicants will be informed if a resource or tuition fee is payable and how payment will be collected.
- 7.5 Late applicants to courses will be considered at the discretion of the College. In these circumstances, the College will consider the prior learning of the applicant and the feasibility of the applicant catching up on late work. The College plans a series of additional full and part time courses throughout the year and late applicants may be referred to an alternative start date.
- 7.6 An application may not be accepted from a student who has previously been excluded from the College for misconduct, or who failed to complete or achieve passes in their qualifications. These applications will be subject to the approval of the Assistant Principal.
- 7.7 Learners who disclose they have a mental health condition will be referred to the Additional Learning Support (ALS) team so that discussions around support needs or reasonable adjustment can be made.
- 7.8 A fitness to study certificate may be requested by the College if health problems may disrupt the students' ability to complete the course.

8 Appeals

Applicants, who have applied and went through the interview process and receive a no offer, will be issued a letter confirming the reasons for refusal.

The applicant has a right to appeal and can do so by outlining their reasons to the Assistant Principal within 10 working days of receiving the letter. The decision of the Assistant Principal is final.

9 Access to Policy

This Policy is available on the College Intranet.

10 Mechanisms for Feedback

Constructive comment on the continued improvement of this Policy is welcomed and should be sent to the Director of Services for Students.