

ADMISSIONS POLICY

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SLT Lead:	Director of Learner Experience, Marketing and Communication
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ADMISSIONS POLICY

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the principles and procedures applied by Waltham Forest College to select and admit learners on college programmes.

The Admissions Policy also supports the delivery of the College's strategic aims and ensures that all learners have equal access to a college programme, which includes apprenticeships and work-based training and have access to high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance.

This policy is reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team responsible for approving policy and regulations relating to admissions.

2. Overview

Waltham Forest College believes in the transformative nature of Further Education and the wide-ranging impact education can have on individuals and the wider community through widening participation. The College encourages applications from all learners irrespective of socio-economic status or background who have the potential to benefit from further education courses and to succeed at college.

We are committed to:

- Equal opportunity of access to further education.
- Encouraging and welcoming diversity and equality, ensuring that our processes and procedures are reasonable and equitable.
- Supporting applicants throughout the application process through reasonable adjustments based on need.
- Using standardised selection methods in order admit learners based on their current achievement and potential to succeed.
- Applying admissions practices that are consistent, fair and transparent.
- Constant improvement and review of our processes.

3. Responsibility for implementation

The admissions policy applies to all staff that are involved in providing high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance to all learners throughout the different stages of recruitment and learner journey.

4. Selection Process

In considering individual applicants for admissions to a course, the College requires evidence of prior learning, or appropriate alternative evidence of personal, professional and educational experience demonstrating academic potential and the ability to achieve the aims and learning outcomes of the course.

Admissions decisions are made through a standardised comparison between set entry criteria and the applicant's past and predicted academic performance. Applicants will be

required to provide evidence of educational attainment through the provision of transcripts and certificates in all cases.

In some cases where consultations for EHCP need to be held with the appropriate local authorities, decisions will be reached and communicated back to the learner based on the College's ability to provide appropriate support structures, based on individual needs.

Each course may have individual requirements such as interview, assessments or DBS checks. Applicants are encouraged to view the individual entry criteria on the relevant course page on our website before submitting an application.

5. Mitigating Circumstances and Contextual Data

Waltham Forest College will consider mitigating circumstances such as illness or personal bereavement where it can be demonstrated to have had a negative impact on the previous academic attainment. In relevant cases, applicants should contact the Learner Services team to request this be taken into consideration. In such cases the College may offer a place should there be confidence that the applicant has the ability to catch up on work.

6. Accuracy of applicant information

An offer of a place is based on the information provided by the applicant at any point during the application process. Waltham Forest College shall withdraw an applicant from a programme of study if the application is found to have been based on, or to have included, false or incomplete information at the time of enrolment.

If an application does not contain enough information to make a decision, we will give the applicant every opportunity to provide further supporting information in due consideration of course start dates.

7. Applicants

Waltham Forest College will ensure that:

- Applications are entered onto the system and acknowledged
- 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, should provide an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) 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 English and maths until a grade A*-C or 9-4 at GCSE is achieved
- All applicants for full time courses will be interviewed. Most interviews will be conducted at scheduled interview events
- Co-ordination of interview times, initial assessments and invitations to prospective students for interview rests with Learner Services
- For those students who would like to access the impartial careers guidance service and discuss careers options, an interview will be arranged with an appropriate Careers Guidance Adviser or Learner Services Adviser.

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

- Abilities of the applicant using, as necessary, initial assessment and predicted grades. 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 and support needs of the applicant
- The skills, experience and interests of the applicant
- The previous performance, conduct and achievement on College run courses
- 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

Waltham Forest College will make every effort to ensure that:

- The career aspirations 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 learners 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

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

8. Applicants with criminal convictions

Applications from candidates with criminal convictions will be carefully considered. Applicants will be required, upon request, to provide full details of any unspent convictions or pending court hearings. The College retains the right to refuse entry to any applicant with a criminal conviction that may jeopardise the security and safety of our learners and staff, or where professional body requirements related to course specific regulations apply.

9. 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. Entry criteria are clearly published in all course information sheets, the prospectus and the College website.

In cases where achievement of specific grades is required to secure a place, this will be discussed in detail during the interview and enrolment stage. 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.

10. Applicants with disabilities or additional support needs

Waltham Forest College welcomes applications from learners with disabilities or who may have a long-term medical condition or learning differences. These applicants will be assessed by the same criteria as all other applicants. Any reasonable adjustments will be taken into account as part of this process. Applicants are invited to declare a disability on their application form and invited to contact the admissions office should they require reasonable adjustments for any part of the selection process.

With reasonable adjustments in place applicants must be able to meet the required entry standard of the course. All applications are considered against our set criteria, and we do not take information regarding an applicant's disability into account when making a decision to offer a place. The Additional Learning Support team will discuss any additional support they may need whilst studying the course. Information on how to contact these teams is also included in offer letters and is available online.

11. Applicant data

Data provided by applicants is processed by the College in accordance with the GDPR Data Protection Policy. Such data is used for the purpose of processing applications and becomes part of an applicant's student record, where that applicant is admitted as a learner of Waltham Forest College.

12. Appeals

Applicants dissatisfied with the admissions process should submit a formal complaint in accordance with the College complaints procedure.

APPENDIX A: Waltham Forest College: Provider Access Policy

Introduction

This policy statement sets out the College's arrangements for managing the access of providers to the College for the purpose of giving them information about the provider's education or training offer. This complies with the College's legal obligations under Section 42B of the Education Act 1997.

Learner Entitlement

All learners from Waltham Forest College are entitled to:

- Hear from a range of providers about the opportunities they offer, including higher education, technical education courses offered by further education and specialist training providers. Linking their aspirations to a career pathway.
- Meet with employers and apprenticeship providers to find out about careers opportunities that lead to meaningful careers progression and employability.
- Get support and develop their skills to make an application for academic courses as well as employment opportunities offered by a range of providers.
- Comprehensive high-quality information, advice and guidance.

Opportunity for Access

Providers, parents and carers will have the opportunity to speak to our learners during one of our events, which is integrated into the College careers programme. The range of careers events offered by the Waltham Forest College include:

- Open events
- Fresher's Fair
- Induction Talks
- HE Fair
- Apprenticeship week events, including Job Fair
- National Careers Week events
- HE Finance and aspiration to HE
- Employer Fair in collaboration with JCP
- Skill development workshops
- SEND Job Fair in collaboration with Local London Careers Hub
- Adhoc workshop link to subject specific

Meaningful Provider Encounters

Waltham Forest College organise a number of events including the HE Fair, Employer Fair, Aspiration to HE and universities workshops, which all intended to help our learners explore future education options and employment opportunities relevant to their career pathway. Learners had one-to-one discussions with providers and gained information and impartial advice on the appropriate career route they will need to undertake.

Employer and Careers Activities by Type

Learners participated in a range of activities, including employer talks, Higher Education and employers' fairs, motivational speakers, university insight days and workplace visits. These activities were developed by the careers team and with greater emphasis on employer engagement with the view of building long-term well-established relationships.

Opportunity for Access

We offer a number of events which are integrated into the College careers programme that will offer providers an opportunity to come into college and speak with our learners and/or their parents. Please speak to our Careers Leader to identify the most suitable opportunity for you.

Premises and Facilities

The College can offer appropriate space relevant to each of the activities including spaces that hold a large audience for careers workshops or classrooms which will be appropriate for small group discussions.

The College will also make available projectors and other specialist equipment to support provider presentations. This will all be discussed and agreed upon in advance of the visit with the Careers Leader or members of the Learner Services Team.

Management of Provider Access Request

A provider wishing to request access to learners at Waltham Forest College should contact:

Ali Yusuf

Head of Learner Services & Careers / Careers Leader

Email: Ali.yusuf@waltham.ac.uk or myfuture@waltham.ac.uk

Tel: 020 8501 8114