

Admissions Policy



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Analysis of effects on equality completed by: Positive About Inclusion	Analysis of effects on equality completed on: 03.06.2024

Monitor Changes

Version Level	Details of Change	Date
01	New Policy – Amalgamates the Student Recruitment Procedure and Statement on the Recruitment of Learners who are Ex-Offenders and review of compliance with the OfS.	July 2024

01 Aim

Gateshead College (**“the College”**) is committed to providing a fair, open, and inclusive admissions process that supports and guides each individual applicant. We value diversity, equality and inclusion and work to make sure that our college is a place where everyone is valued, feels they belong and can access a high-quality learning experience.

This policy outlines the College’s practice for managing the admissions of learners and aims to provide a fair and consistent process. It applies to all learners, including full-time and part-time students, higher education students and apprentices and covers the learner journey, from initial inquiry to the start of the course.

The Admissions Policy underpins our duty of care to ensure that all those wanting to study at the College are placed on an appropriate level of course that will allow them to succeed.

If you need this information in a different format or language, would like someone to help explain it to you or require any other support please let us know by emailing start@gateshead.ac.uk or calling 0191 490 0300.

02 Scope

This applies to all learners, including full-time and part-time students, higher education students and apprentices applying to study on a programme at the College.

Key search words for this document

Admissions, Applications

3.1 OBJECTIVES

This policy aims to ensure that the College:

- Treats all applicants fairly via an open and transparent admissions process and does not treat applicants less favourably on the grounds of any protected characteristic.
- Is compliant with the requirements of regulatory bodies such as the Office for Students (OfS).
- Provides applicants with access to information, advice and guidance at all stages of the admissions process including providing clear entry criteria, accurate and clear course information, qualification aims, costs, study requirements, progression routes and assessment methods.
- Provides the opportunity for applicants to disclose any learning difficulty and/or disability and to be referred to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) team at the earliest opportunity.
- Provides impartial information, advice, and guidance to help students make well-informed decisions about their choice of course.
- Makes every effort to secure the necessary special education provision that a young person needs in line with statutory duties of Post-16 Institutions outlined in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0 to 25 years.
- Processes applications quickly and efficiently.
- Provides detailed information and advice on College facilities and support services.
- Provides advice and recommendations of alternative courses should an applicant's choice of course not be appropriate having received good quality information, advice and guidance.
- Allocates places on a first-come, first-served basis when a course is oversubscribed and a limit on numbers has been approved, whilst also providing information on alternative options.
- Treats applicants with courtesy and respect.
- Provides information, advice and guidance that meets the requirements of the Department for Education's matrix Standard.

3.2 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The College is committed to ensuring that the admissions process will be open and transparent and that no individual is subjected to any unlawful discrimination. At all times, the College will consider and adhere to its duty under its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in line with the College's Equality and Diversity Policy. Staff at the College receive training and refresher training on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).

The College is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities, including those with learning difficulties, are treated fairly. All reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not disadvantaged. High needs support will be discussed with applicants as part of the admissions process.

3.3 RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director of Brand and Learner Experience holds executive responsibility and strategic oversight of the policy.

The Head of Student Services and Customer Experience is responsible for developing, implementing, and reviewing the policy and procedures effectively.

The Student Recruitment and Admissions Manager and team are responsible for the day-to-day administration and implementation of the procedures and guidelines outlined in this policy.

All members of staff have a responsibility to undertake their duties relating to admissions in line with the policy.

3.4 APPLICANTS WITH HEALTH, DISABILITY, ADDITIONAL LEARNING SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS OR EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLANS (EHCPs)

Any learner who declares a learning difficulty or disability at application or enrolment will meet with the member of the additional learning support team to discuss the appropriate support arrangements. The College will help applicants with learning difficulties/disabilities by assessing their learning needs and by providing additional support where appropriate.

Additional support throughout the enquiry to enrolment process will be available to those who require it.

Recommendations will be discussed with the learner and teachers and responsibilities will be agreed and an individual support plan produced. This will be reviewed throughout the course.

3.5 APPLICANT ENTITLEMENTS

Information on college open events and how to apply can be found at <https://www.gateshead.ac.uk/study-with-us>. When applying to be a student at the College an applicant is entitled to the following:

- A fair, consistent, and inclusive admission process. Curriculum Teams lead on the admissions process for programmes and will consider the factors below when making decisions on suitability for programme (this list is not exhaustive):
 - Application forms;
 - Personal statements;
 - References;
 - Qualifications;
 - Performance at interviews
 - Any other assessments e.g. portfolios, auditions or sample of written work;
 - or
 - Language proficiency.
- Impartial information, advice and guidance to help the applicant make informed decisions about their education and chosen career path.
- Timely responses to an enquiry or application. Automatic email acknowledgments and initial responses will be sent in two working days.
- Clear information about course entry requirements when applying for and receiving an offer from the College. This can be found at www.gateshead.ac.uk
- Impartial information and guidance about courses, student support, and other College services.
- Opportunities to discuss individual options with qualified Careers Guidance Officers or subject specialists.

- Taster/transition plans for applicants with an Education Health and Care Plan (Statement of Needs, Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDA), Section 139a) to meet their individual needs (possibly before applying).
- Opportunities to visit the College and familiarise themselves with the facilities and resources.
- Specialist guidance for those requiring student support services.
- Access to accurate and specialist advice regarding eligibility for fee remission and funding/bursary opportunities.
- Marketing materials (digital and print) and recruitment activities that provide accurate information about courses and help the applicant to make informed decisions about their options.
- Well-organised, efficient, and responsive enrolment arrangements.
- The provision of information in an alternative and accessible format where necessary.
- Appropriate individualised support to enable the applicant to complete the application, interview, audition and familiarisation visits to the College.
- An induction to the College and the course.
- Guidance and support to explore suitable alternatives if a conditional offer cannot be met.

3.6 APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES

All applicants must:

- Provide evidence of previous qualifications, education, and/or work experience that meets the course entry criteria.
- Provide proof of right to study in the UK.
- Provide sufficient evidence of employment status when discussing fee remission or course eligibility with the admissions team.
- Demonstrate a strong commitment to further study and the College's ethos, including attending Maths and English programmes if needed.
- Undertake additional assessments or provide information as necessary to allow the College to ensure the course is suitable and appropriate. This can include initial assessments, auditions or trials depending on the course area.
- Disclose any unspent criminal convictions or ongoing investigations by the police or other law enforcement agency as outlined in the College's criminal conviction guidance. This includes enrolled students who receive a criminal conviction whilst on a course at College. Please note that declaring a criminal conviction does not automatically prevent anyone from becoming or continuing as a student and we offer appropriate support when necessary. However, if a risk assessment is identified as 'high risk' then admission to the College will be refused. The risk assessment will be completed by a member of the safeguarding team, the curriculum team with input from the applicant and any other external agencies where necessary.
- Obtain a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate when required for specific courses.
- Agree to abide by the College's Student Code of Conduct and the Disciplinary Procedure.

3.7 RIGHT TO REFUSE ADMISSION

Gateshead College may, in its absolute discretion, refuse an application to study at the College on the following non-exhaustive grounds:

- Inability to meet the minimum entry requirements for the course applied for.
- Failure to provide residency or proof of status documentation.
- Inability to provide evidence of appropriate funding for the course. Please see the college's fees and refunds policy for further details.
- If an applicant has an unspent criminal conviction or is being investigated for a criminal offence which falls under the College's criminal conviction guidance.
- If the College considers, in its reasonable opinion, that the applicant may endanger or pose a risk of harm to employees or students of the College.
- Outstanding fees from a previous course with the College.
- Failure to meet the expectations of the [Student Code of Conduct](#) in any previous courses studied at the College.
- If the applicant has specific physical, medical, social or curriculum needs which the College considers, in its reasonable opinion, that it is unable to meet.
- Applicant is not deemed [Fit to Study](#).
- Where there is evidence that any part of an application may be plagiarised or where there is evidence that fraudulent or incorrect information has been provided to the College.

If an applicant cannot be accepted onto the chosen course (whether for one of the above reasons or otherwise), we will explore suitable alternatives and provide appropriate advice and guidance to enable applicants to make alternative choices.

Gateshead College is committed to equality and inclusive access to learning for all however, this policy does not mean that the College will automatically endorse any and every course choice indicated by prospective students. Effective careers education, information, advice and guidance may mean that we recommend a course which is different from the one the applicant originally applied for when we believe a different course to be more appropriate to their needs.

3.8 APPEALS

If any applicant is dissatisfied with the decision regarding their application, they can submit an appeal through the College Complaints Procedure. Applicants should state clear reasons for their appeal and produce supporting evidence if needed.

Appeals should be made in writing and be addressed to:

Darren Heathcote
Head of Student Services and Customer Experience
Gateshead College
Baltic Campus
Quarryfield Road
Gateshead NE8 3BE

The applicant will then be advised of the outcome and any action to be taken in writing within 10 working days of the appeal being received.

3.9 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The implementation of the Admissions Policy is monitored via:

- The Matrix Quality Standard
- Customer Feedback
- Performance monitoring reports relating to applications and conversion

- Monitoring early withdrawals and transfers
- Sampling of completed interview documentation
- College self-assessment process
- EDI data

3.10 LIMITATIONS

The policies and procedures described in this document and the supporting documents apply to prospective students intending to join full time and part time programmes of study, apprenticeships and Higher Education courses delivered at the College.

3.11 DATA PROTECTION

The College will process applicant's personal and special category data in accordance with all applicable data protection legislation, including the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR, and in compliance with the College's data protection policy.

Further details of how the College processes applicant data, data subject rights and the contact details of the Data Protection Officer can be found at

<https://www.gateshead.ac.uk/privacy-notice>

3.12 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

A copy of the college's terms and conditions can be found at

<https://www.gateshead.ac.uk/storage/app/media/Terms%20and%20Conditions.pdf>

04 Related Documents

[Equality and Diversity Policy](#)

[Complaints Procedure - members of the public](#)

[Complaints Procedure – students and customers](#)

[Criminal Conviction Guidance](#)