

Admissions Policy

STU8

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This document can also be produced in alternative formats upon request.

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Admissions Policy

1. Purpose

This Admissions Policy aims to ensure that:

- The College operates in a fair, equitable and transparent manner in the acceptance and enrolment of applicants.
- Students are recruited with integrity, to courses identified as appropriate for them based on their career aspirations, previous qualifications and/or work/life experience at the point of application.
- Access to College courses is widened as far as possible in line with DfE Widening Access and Participation guidance.
- Associated Admissions administrative processes can be implemented in the most efficient and effective manner.
- The College Terms and Conditions are reviewed and current.

2. Background

Each academic year, the College invites applications for further and higher education programmes, including WBL and professional qualifications, on a full and part time basis. This policy supports the College in continuing to meet its strategic priority of 'Improved Learner Outcomes' and demonstrates the College's commitment to an effective and timely process in matching applicants to courses, based on their needs and aspirations.

3. Admissions Principles

- a. All applications will be reviewed on merit and on the information held on the completed online application form. The College reserves the right to review previous records to assess suitability for a course.
- b. For all full time and substantial part time FE, HE and WBL programmes, a pre-entry advice session will be offered, and for many courses, will be mandatory. Failure to attend a mandatory pre-entry advice session without reasonable notice may impact on an applicant's place in the recruitment process. The College reserves the right to

reallocate priority based on a lack of communication or engagement in the College recruitment process from any applicant.

- c. Decisions about eligibility for a course will be made objectively and without discrimination. Staff will not venture outside of the agreed processes for reviewing applicant suitability for a course and in the issuing of any offers. At each application review period, where courses are oversubscribed, applicants will be prioritised on the following:
 - i. Course listed as first preference.
 - ii. Date of application.
 - iii. FE: if mandatory or strongly encouraged, attendance at the information session.
HE: if mandatory or strongly encouraged, attendance at an interview.
Note: where attendance at an information session or interview is not mandatory or strongly encouraged, non-attendance will be used in oversubscription criteria.
 - iv. Upload of any evidence required by the advertised dates e.g. photographic ID, prior achievement, employer form, health declaration, as requested by publicised date and in any communication issued.
 - v. Applicants must evidence that they have means to pay for the course where appropriate. This may mean payment in full, evidence of an application for funding, or an agreement to pay fees in instalments. Offers made may include payment as part of the conditions of enrolment.
 - vi. Previous College student or a student from a partner school
- d. Selection criteria will be signed off by the Curriculum Management Team at the start of each admissions cycle and advertised on the College website and in the prospectus.
- e. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is 'a method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills that they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning'. In the context of the QCF, the definition of RPL is quite specific and relates to

assessment leading to the award of credit. Assessment for RPL is conducted against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of a unit/module and is subject to exactly the same internal and external quality assurance requirements as any other kind of assessment. In such cases, the requirement to meet the stated academic entry requirements may be waived. The College Curriculum team will be required to confirm details of non-standard or professional qualifications and relevant work experience with named referees and other professional bodies, as applicable. Such decisions will be referred to the respective partner institution before confirmation of an offer.

- f. Where applicants can directly enrol onto a course, they must apply for the course and pay the required fees either online or by contacting the College. Applicants will only be fully enrolled once both these steps have taken place.
- g. The College will adhere to its safeguarding responsibilities when considering the admission of students with criminal convictions. For more information, please access the [Student Criminal Convictions Disclosure Policy](#)
- h. The College has an obligation to applicants and students to ensure that they do not commence or continue on a programme of study or embark on a career for which they may not be suited, particularly given the considerable time, commitment and possible expense involved in the process of qualification. For more information, please access the [Fitness to Practise Policy](#)
- i. All applications will be considered equitably without regard to any inappropriate distinction e.g., Section 75 characteristics such as age, ethnic origin, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, gender, religious or political beliefs, marital status, care experience and/or socio-economic background.
- j. The Curriculum Director has overall accountability for the Admissions Process.
- k. The Head of Department for Student Experience has overall management responsibility for the monitoring and quality control of the Admissions Process.

4. Non-Admission

The College reserves the right to refuse admission to the following:

- a. An applicant who does not meet the advertised entry criteria for the course they have applied for.

- b. an applicant who has previously:
 - i. been excluded from the College and/or a partner organisation,
 - ii. attended but failed to make sufficient effort towards successfully completing their studies.
- c. An applicant who has not attended mandatory, or strongly encouraged pre-entry advice sessions.
- d. An applicant with outstanding College debts.
- e. An applicant where despite best endeavours, the College is unable to make the adaptations required for them to participate wholly in their studies.
- f. An applicant who has already attained the level of study equal to or higher than the level for which they are applying without a clear rationale.
- g. An applicant where there is evidence that they could be a threat or danger to others.
- h. An applicant with a declared criminal conviction that does not satisfy the requirements of the pre-entry risk assessment.

5. Waiting List

A waiting list will be available in instances where offers exceed the number of advertised places on a course

6. Oversubscription

If more applicants for a course meet the entry criteria than places available on the course, the admissions policy must be adhered to. Applicants must not be turned away from courses, and no course is full until deemed so by the Curriculum Director at the 4pm daily enrolment meetings.

If an additional cohort cannot be offered to deal with the increased demand, places will be allocated in order of the criteria within the College Admissions Policy, which is:

1. Course listed as first preference.
2. Date of application.
3. Attendance at the first available interview and/or information session if required.
4. Upload of any evidence required by the advertised dates e.g., Prior achievement, employer response form, vision verification form, as requested by the publicised date and in any communication issued.

5. Previous College student or a student from a partner school

Enhanced entry criteria must only be used by exception and in agreement with the Curriculum Director. It must be applied alongside the above criteria and all applicants treated in a fair and equitable manner

7. Course Cancellation

The College reserves the right to cancel courses at any time prior to the enrolment period commencing, and in some instances, cancellation may take place after enrolment has commenced. In all instances of course cancellation, the College will inform applicants as soon as possible and will make every effort to reassign the applicant to an alternative suitable course. All course cancellations will be approved by the Curriculum Director prior to any communication being issued to applicants.

8. Qualifications on Entry

The College advertises entry criteria for courses on the website and within the online prospectus and it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure they meet the entry criteria prior to enrolment. Conditional offers will be based on eligibility against these advertised qualifications.

Any applicant who has applied for a Level 2 or Level 3 vocational study programme will be enrolled on Essential Skills or GCSE Maths or English as part of their programme of study. This is only in instances where it has been approved for an applicant to be enrolled on a vocational programme without these qualifications as a prerequisite. Enrolment on Essential Skills or GCSE Maths and English is mandatory, and no student will be enrolled onto a Level 2 or L3 full time vocational programme without this. If an applicant declines this at the enrolment stage, their application to the full study programme will be withdrawn and the waiting list will be accessed to offer the next available space to a student.

The College delivers and assesses all qualifications in English, and as such, an appropriate level of English is a prerequisite for all courses, apart from those aimed at non-English speakers i.e., ESOL. Progression from ESOL through to full-time L2 and L3 vocational

programmes is possible, and further information can be gained from the ESOL section of the College prospectus.

If a student has achieved an international qualification and would like it checked for eligibility for entry to a programme of study at the College, they can access the services of NARIC for a 'Statement of Comparability'. It is the responsibility of the applicant to cover the cost of this.

Further information can be found at

<https://www.naric.org.uk/Qualifications/SOC/Default.aspx>

9. Admissions Feedback and Appeals Procedure

The College is committed to fair, transparent and consistent admissions practices and believes that providing constructive feedback about an unsuccessful application will help an applicant to achieve a successful outcome in the future. The College will therefore provide feedback, when requested, to anyone whose application to study at the College has been unsuccessful.

Following the provision of feedback, an applicant will have the right to appeal the selection decision, providing that there are sufficient grounds for an appeal. The 'Admissions, Feedback and Appeals Procedure' outlines how an applicant can access feedback or appeal a selection decision. For more information, please access the [Admissions Feedback and Appeals Procedure](#).

10. Quality Assurance

Comments and complaints regarding this document will be handled through the College's comments and complaints mechanisms. For more information, please access the [Complaints Policy](#). If you have a comment or complaint, or require further information regarding the process, please e-mail quality.improvement@nrc.ac.uk.

11. Monitoring and Review of this Policy

This policy/strategy will be monitored on an ongoing basis and subject to a full review at least every two years.

It may also be updated if changes or improvements in processes or procedures are identified.

In monitoring and reviewing this policy/strategy, the following will be taken into consideration:

- feedback regarding the content and format of the policy/strategy;
- uptake and usage;
- comments or complaints regarding the policy/strategy;

12. Links to other Documents

12.1. Internal Documents:

- [Admissions Policy](#)
- [Admissions Feedback and Appeals Procedure](#).
- [Retention and Disposal Schedule](#)
- [Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Student Criminal Convictions Policy](#)
- [Student Equal Opportunities Policy](#)

Appendix 1 - Applications – How to apply timeline

Step 1

- Find the course you are applying to and select "Add course to basket" and apply now.
 - You will be redirected to the [admissions portal](#).
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Step 2

- Create an account using a personal email address and password
 - If you are a current or past Northern Regional College student, please add in your current student ID number when prompted.
 - Enter your qualifications
 - [Evidence upload](#) - upload supporting documents for your application in the evidence section, for example, photographic ID, exam certificates and references.
 - Review and submit. The application confirmation page will then be displayed.
 - You must select a preference for each course eg 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th or 5th choice.
 - You will receive an automatic response by email confirming your application, please check your spam and junk folders.
 - Please also check your online account regularly for updates and correspondence about your application.
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Step 3

- Your application will be reviewed on the following dates by the Curriculum Area Manager or delegated to the Curriculum Teaching Team:

Application Review Dates

3 February and 17 February
3, 18 and 31 March
7 April and 28 April
12 May and 27 May
9 June and 23 June
11 August

You will receive an email communication from the College within 5 working days of each of these dates to update you on the progress of your application. You may be contacted outside of these dates if you are outstanding any information required to process your application. Please submit outstanding information as soon as possible otherwise your application may be delayed.

- You may be invited to an information event which may be held on campus or online. For apprenticeships, you may have to complete an aptitude test.
 - You may be made a conditional offer which is subject to you meeting the specified entry requirements and any other criteria. If a course is oversubscribed, enhanced criteria may be applied which will be published in advance.
 - **Note: a conditional offer does not guarantee you a place on the course.**
 - If you have been made a conditional offer, you will be sent instructions on how to upload any evidence required and enrol.
 - You may be invited to make a payment to secure your place, pending availability
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Step 4

Enrolment

- Once you receive your results you can enrol online from home. Further details will be sent via email, text or postcard.
- If you need help to enrol online, please contact any campus reception and we will assist with this.
- If you have not met the conditions of your offer, the College will assist you in finding another suitable course. If you change your mind, you can withdraw your application at any time.

Appendix 2 - Pre-entry Information sessions / Interviews / Auditions

Despite impressing with your application, the Curriculum team may still want to meet you before making an offer - give yourself the best chance of securing your place by discovering how to prepare for a Northern Regional College interview

What to expect

Interviews, information sessions and auditions are sometimes used by lecturing staff towards the end of the College application process as a means of comparing applicants with a good chance of being offered places on their courses.

They're more likely to be held for creative or care-related programmes, as well as for entry into many of the Work Based Learning courses.

While the form and length of the interview will vary between College Departments, most are based on a discussion with the course lecturer.

For some courses, you may need to bring along a portfolio showing examples of your best work. This usually only applies to courses in the arts, but those wishing to study Performing Arts may be required to perform an audition piece. This can happen in person or you may be asked to submit an audition piece directly to the lecturer.

The interviewer will want to maintain an element of surprise with regards to the interview - but they should at least let you know in advance if you'll be expected to complete a task.

How to prepare for a College interview / audition / information session

In advance of your interview, it's important to prepare properly. You can do this by:

- sorting out your travel arrangements in plenty of time
- finding out exactly where the interview / audition information session will take place
- ensuring your laptop and webcam are all set up and working correctly - if your interview is being held online
- thinking carefully about why you've chosen this course, making notes from your application
- planning questions to ask the College interviewer
- thoroughly researching the course and the College
- ensuring you're up to date with current affairs relating to your subject
- carrying out a mock interview with a careers adviser or teacher to see how well you perform under pressure and to ensure you're adopting the right body language

If you're wondering how to get the most out of the interview experience, we offer the following pointers:

- **Decide if this is where you want to study**
- **Be prepared for group discussions**
- **Showcase your skills**