

Admissions Policy

1. Policy Statement

Wigan & Leigh College is committed to a fair, consistent and impartial admissions procedure for learners wishing to study at the College. The College is committed to raising learners' aspirations, widening participation and promoting equality of access. The College will support applicants who are seeking a place at College and ensure that they are matched to a suitable course wherever possible.

2. Statement of Principles

Wigan & Leigh College aims to provide a fair, consistent and impartial admissions process which delivers high quality impartial information, advice and guidance in line with the matrix quality standard for Information, Advice & Guidance.

There is a comprehensive range of up-to-date information about courses on offer, including all fees and costs involved as well as detailed information on facilities and services available. Opportunities to visit the College and view the facilities are available.

All applicants will have access to a one to one interview where individual need, potential and aspiration will be discussed. Impartial information, advice and guidance will be available at each stage of the admissions process, so that prospective students can make informed and appropriate choices. During this process individual learning needs and support mechanisms are discussed to ensure applicants are appropriately matched to a course and specialist guidance is available for those needing additional learning support services. The admissions process uses fair and impartial selection criteria which are consistently applied and the process aims to be accessible and understandable to applicants and is consistent with the College's commitment to equality and diversity.

The College will ensure that there is a well organised and efficient enrolment procedures in place and that all students receive an induction to the College and the course.

Existing students wishing to progress at College will be given the opportunity to discuss this with their Personal Tutors as part of the progression and re-enrolment process.

All information will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and comply with General Data Protection Regulations. All applicants who disclose a relevant unspent criminal conviction are processed confidentially in the relevant manner.

The Admissions Policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:-

- Further Education Admissions Guidelines and Procedures
- University Centre Admissions Guidelines and Procedures
- Apprenticeship Admissions Guidelines and Procedures

3. Changes to courses

Wigan & Leigh College will do all that it reasonably can to deliver its courses. In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to discontinue a programme or to make significant changes to a programme between the time an offer is made and enrolment, in which case applicants will be notified at the earliest opportunity and advised of the options available.

4. Criteria for an offer of a place on a course

The offer of a place on a course will be made based on the following criteria:

- Suitability of the applicant for the programme they have applied for; and
- Meeting the course entry requirements (qualifications and/or previous experience and/or DBS clearance for particular courses)

Interviewers will assess the suitability of the applicant and their predicted or confirmed grades matching the entry requirements for the course when deciding to offer a place on a course.

The course entry requirements and any additional suitability criteria are outlined on the College website www.wigan-leigh.ac.uk and also in the relevant prospectus.

5. Suitability of applicant

The College will provide advice and guidance in connection with course applications and admissions to the College and seek to ensure that the offer of a place on a course is appropriate and meet individual needs.

All applicants must:

- Satisfy the requirements for admission to the course.
- Demonstrate a commitment to further study and the ethos of the College
- Provide evidence of their previous qualifications and/or work experience history
- Demonstrate appropriate behaviour in line with the College's standards and expectations.
- Undertake further assessments as necessary to allow the College to support any learning support needs.

The College is committed to seeking to find a suitable course for all applicants subject to course availability and applicant suitability requirements.

6. Fitness to study

The College aims to be accessible for as many people as possible, and has a wide range of support services to enable access to learning. However, there may be occasions where the college has concerns regarding the fitness to study of a potential student, e.g. due to information provided by the student, a parent/carer, their school, the Local Authority etc. Information about an individual's health condition, profound or complex needs, safeguarding issues, or social / emotional difficulties may raise concern as to whether the college is equipped to meet the individual's needs. In these cases there may be a need to conduct a more specialised interview or desk assessment to consider all factors

6.1 An appropriate multi-disciplinary college team will undertake the process with external involvement of the student, family, school or Local Authority as appropriate in each individual case.

6.2 A range of evidence may be utilised in the assessment which may include-

- The Statement of Special Educational Needs
- Education, Health and Care Plan

- Medical evidence
- Psychiatric/Psychological evidence and assessment
- Reports from schools or college
- Physical, emotional and social needs
- Specialist treatments and therapies
- Vulnerability and Safeguarding
- The activities of daily living
- Level of attainment
- The level of support, special equipment and specialist environment
- Input from the applicant, the family or external parties.

We would not admit a student if their admission would be incompatible of the effective education of others, including keeping them safe.

6.3 The process will consider whether Wigan & Leigh College can offer a suitable curriculum and support for the individual, and a decision will be made in consultation with the Assistant Principal and the Head of Learning Support and Resources. In cases where there are significant funding implications there will be consultation with the relevant Local Authority (where the student is age 16-18, or age 19-24 and has an Education, Health and Care Plan). The college will make best endeavours to accommodate needs and enable applicants to enrol wherever reasonably practicable. Where this is judged not to be possible, the applicant will be informed of the reasons why.

7. Late applications and enrolments

Students who apply or delay their enrolment beyond the main enrolment period (GCSE results day in August for study programmes), risk refusal in some instances if courses are full to capacity.

Decisions to take extra students will depend on the physical restraints of the accommodation, resources and / or health & safety considerations.

8. Applicants requiring additional support

Applicants are usually identified as requiring additional support from their application form. Applicants are strongly encouraged to disclose this information within the application process. Failure to do so may mean the College cannot put appropriate support arrangements into place for the start of the course. The Additional Learning Support Team is notified of all applicants that disclose any support needs on their application form.

The Additional Learning Support Team will usually be available at Interviews to discuss support needs and to arrange for appropriate support to be put in place. The interview will take place in an accessible and private environment where applicants feel able to discuss their support needs.

Where an applicant has an EHCP and/or is likely to be high needs, an offer of a place will be subject to the applicant's Local Authority agreeing adequate Additional Learning Support funding.

9. Criminal convictions

Applications from ex-offenders are welcomed but disclosure of unspent convictions will be asked during the application process.

Wigan & Leigh College aims to create a safe and healthy environment. This includes for all those studying and working on and off site or using any of its services. In addition we have a duty of care including to those under the age of 18 years of age and those deemed vulnerable and at risk. Therefore we need to know about those applicants who have unspent convictions related to serious offences. If any applicant has a serious unspent conviction they will be asked to complete a confidential form before the offer of a place at College is made. Confidentially the Designated Protection Officer or their designated nominee will make a decision as to whether the application can continue and the applicant is offered a place at College.

If an applicant fails to reveal an unspent conviction prior to their enrolment, any enrolment agreement with the College may be terminated with immediate effect.

Please note - Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an applicant from a place on a college course. This will depend on the nature of the circumstances and background of the offence

Certain courses (Childcare, Health & Social Care, Sport and Teacher Education) are exempt under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and these applicants are also required to declare any spent convictions. Students on these courses will also be required to have a DBS (Disclosure Barring Service) check prior to the start of their course.

Further guidance is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

10. Right to refusing admission

On occasions the College may choose to refuse an application to study at the College for the following reason(s).

- The applicant has previously been a student at the College and has been excluded. This will be referred to the Head of Marketing & Admissions who will consider this along with the relevant Head of Studies and the Assistant Principal. Students who have been permanently excluded will not be able to apply to study at Wigan & Leigh College.
- The applicant has previously been a student at the College and has any outstanding monies owing to the College (e.g. not all fees have been paid). The applicant's application will not proceed until all outstanding debts are cleared.
- The applicant has not met the course entry requirements. If the applicant has not met the entry requirements, then the College will seek to find a suitable alternative course and offer advice and guidance to enable applicants to make alternative choices.
- If the suitability requirements are not met by the applicant they may be refused entry to the College if the College has not got a suitable course offer for an applicant or if the applicant is not suitable for reasons highlighted in section 4 for the course for which they have applied.

11. Appeals

If an applicant wishes to appeal against an admissions decision, then they must do so in writing initially to the Head of Marketing and Admissions within 10 working days of the date on the decision letter.

The appeal will then be considered by a panel consisting of the Vice Principal – Curriculum and Head of Department or their appointed nominees.

The College will consider all appeals and inform applicants of the decision normally within 5 working days of receipt of the appeal letter.

12. Responsibilities and Duties

Responsibility for the implementation of the Admissions Policy lies with the Head of Marketing & Admissions.

Interviewing staff have a responsibility to ensure that impartial information, advice and guidance are provided to all applicants and applications are considered in a fair and consistent manner.

The Admissions team are responsible for the day to day administration of applications and implementation of the procedures and guidelines described in this document.

Wigan & Leigh College ensures that the personal information provided by an applicant remains confidential by the designated parties and includes a declaration on the College application form authorising the release of information that they have supplied to the designated parties in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

13. Monitoring Arrangements

This Policy will be monitored and reviewed by Principal, and annual reports will be received by the Executive Team and the Curriculum Committee of the Governing Board.

Signed _____ College Principal

Originator _____ Head of Marketing & Admissions

Date of Issue September 2020

Review Date July 2021

Copies of all approved College Policies can be found on the Staff Intranet.