

Further Education College Admissions Policy

1. Scope Statement

The policy relates to the admissions of young people (aged 16-18) and adults (aged 19+) who are applying to study on a Further Education (FE) course at Wigan & Leigh College. The Admissions Policy should be read in conjunction with the Further Education Admissions Guidelines and Procedures

This policy does not apply to those applying for an apprenticeship or Higher Education course. Please refer to:-

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

2. 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.

3. 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 on the college website www.wigan-leigh.ac.uk and in the prospectuses. Opportunities to visit the College and view the facilities are available.

The College has well organised and efficient enrolment procedures in place and all students receive an induction to the College and the course.

Existing students wishing to progress to further courses 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 all applicable data protection laws.

4. 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.

For adult students where fees may be payable, please read the fees policy https://www.wigan-leigh.ac.uk/application/files/4215/7355/4996/9.4_Fees_Policy_March_19-20_V1.pdf

5. 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 course they have applied for; and
- Meeting the course entry requirements (qualifications and/or previous experience and/or DBS clearance for particular courses)

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.

5.1 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 entry requirements for admission to the course (see 5.2).
- Demonstrate a commitment to further study and in meeting college standards and expectations. This might include the applicant providing evidence of:-
 - High levels of attendance in previous study
 - Successful work experience
 - Positive behavioural report from previous education or other appropriate establishment

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

5.2 Meeting the course entry requirements

Interviewers will assess 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.

For certain courses, applicants will be required to attend and undertake a satisfactory audition or portfolio event.

Students on particular courses, where to pass the course students are working with vulnerable individuals through compulsory work placement, will 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>

Alternative assessments may be undertaken where an applicant has no evidence of qualifications (e.g. where an applicant may have been home schooled).

6. 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. If the team are unavailable at interview, an alternative appointment will be arranged. 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 Education Health Care Plan (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. Where adequate funding cannot be agreed the College will refer the applicant back to their home local authority so alternative provision within the local offer can be explored. 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. 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. This will be considered on a case by case basis.

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

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

8. Late applications and enrolments

Applicants who apply or delay their enrolment beyond the main enrolment period (GCSE results day in August for study programmes), risk their place on a course and 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.

9. 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 in accordance with section 6 in the Student Disciplinary & Suspension Procedure. Where a student has been excluded and wishes to return in a different academic year they should write a letter to a Head of Studies and will always be required to have an interview before they can access a place at the 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 outstanding debts are cleared or appropriate arrangements made to repay the debts.
- The applicant has not met the criteria for entry. If the applicant has not met the criteria for entry, advice and guidance will be available 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 5.1 for the course for which they have applied.
- If the College has been refused funding for the applicant and the applicant has been referred back to the Local Authority for alternative placement.
- The applicant has a relevant criminal conviction which is either not spent or can never be spent

10. Appeals and complaints

If an applicant wishes to appeal against an admissions decision, then they must do so in writing stating the grounds of their appeal, 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 senior manager with delegated responsibility from the Principal.

The College will inform applicants of the decision and reasons in writing normally within 5 working days of receipt of the appeal letter.

If an applicant has a complaint about the admissions service, then they can make a complaint in line with the college's Complaints Procedure https://www.wigan-leigh.ac.uk/application/files/1015/6389/0094/15_Complaints_Procedure_updated_May_2019.pdf

11. 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 data provided by an applicant remains confidential and includes a declaration on the College application form authorising the release of personal data that they have supplied to the designated parties in line with all applicable data protection laws.

12. 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 ___Anna Dawe_____ College Principal

Originator ___Kathryn O'Neill_____ Head of Marketing & Admissions

Date of Issue November 2019

Review Date July 2020

Copies of all approved College Policies can be found on the Staff Intranet and website www.wigan-leigh.ac.uk/about/reports-and-policies