

HE Admissions Policy

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Revision History

Version	Purpose/Change	Date
4.0	Periodic review. Addition of Appendices.	September 2021
5.0	Periodic review. Correction of formatting. 3.16 – clarification that the <i>HE Procedure for Students and Potential Students with Criminal Convictions</i> is applicable at all stages of the application and enrolment process. 4.7. Addition of feedback form for complaints Inclusion of hyperlinks to the HE policies webpage	September 2022

Please contact HEoffice@liv-coll.ac.uk or the Reception if you would like this document in an alternative form.

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This policy is written in line with the Expectations and Core practices of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code), which are a key reference point for higher education providers in all parts of the UK.

This Policy relates to the three separate but interconnected areas of admissions, recruitment and widening access, which are of interest to prospective students, enrolled students and their supporters (such as relatives or educators). This Policy aims to build a framework for the College to assure quality in these areas. It is recognised that different learner journeys result in multiple and varied pathways to enrolment. The manner or order with which the prospective student connects with application and enrolment will not necessarily be uniform.

1. Admissions statement and principles

1.1 The City of Liverpool College University Centre is committed to ensuring transparency, consistency and fairness through its admissions policy and procedures.

1.2. This Admissions Policy is aligned with the overall City of Liverpool College Strategic Plan. It is informed by the mission and values of the College, the needs of its students and those of employers. It is also informed by policies of our collaborative partner institutions and awarding bodies.

1.3 Applicants are chosen on merit, and admissions procedures are designed to allow all applicants equal opportunity to demonstrate achievements and potential.

1.4 The College is committed to recruiting students from groups under-represented in higher education generally by:

- Providing adequate support for students who might otherwise not be able to access higher education
- Providing substantial advice and guidance to our own level 3 students to encourage them to progress to higher education
- Aiming outreach activities primarily at pupils studying in areas of Merseyside where there is below average progression to higher education

1.5 The College will operate procedures that are fair to all applicants regardless of age, background, disability, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, pregnancy or maternity and compliant with relevant equality legislation. Policies and procedures will be equality impact assessed and reviewed annually. The City of Liverpool College University Centre actively promotes equality of opportunity, set out in a range of legislative and statutory instruments.

1.6 In addition to its statutory duties, the College's HE Admissions Policy is based on our [Access and Participation Plan](#), available on the College website, and is guided by the principles of fair admissions outlined in the Report of the Admissions to Higher Education Steering Group (2004)¹, in the SPA Good

¹ <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/5284/1/finalreport.pdf>

Practice Guide (2014)², and in the QAA's Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access advice and guidance (2018)³. The processes for admissions vary for different groups of students but this policy covers all routes for admission and aims to be fair to all of them.

2. Responsibility for admissions

2.1 Ensuring that this policy and its integrated procedures for the administration of the admissions process are adhered to are the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team and the Vice Principal.

2.2 The Dean of University Centre is responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are in line with the requirements of the QAA's Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access advice and guidance, and the OfS requirements for Access and Participation Plans. The Dean of University Centre is also responsible for ensuring that the staff making decisions on the suitability of applicants for acceptance on to programmes are suitably qualified and trained to make those decisions. Staff require continuous professional development to ensure they access the latest information on the types of qualifications currently being undertaken by potential applicants and to ensure that staff only make offers that the applicants can fulfil by successful completion of their current course of study.

2.3 The Heads of School in which the higher education provision lies are responsible for ensuring that qualified academic staff are in place to accept students on to programmes on the basis of their confirmed qualifications, and for ensuring that information provided to potential students is up-to-date and accurate.

3. Admissions process and procedures

3.1 Potential applicants may contact the College and obtain information on courses via the website, by emailing or calling the course enquiries team, or via the relevant programme tutor. In addition, the College holds a number of open days where applicants meet the specialist tutors and programme leaders. Detailed course information is available from the College and for the full-time programmes on the UCAS website. The College produces prospectuses that contain programme information together with information on fees and funding and guidance and support available. Prospectuses may be viewed on the College website. The website is checked regularly for compliance with related accessibility guidelines.

3.2 Entry requirements for each programme are set out in validation documentation and College advertising literature. The entry requirements usually detail the expected number of UCAS points a student is required to have to secure a place. Entry requirements may be changed for individual students who can demonstrate alternative qualifications or experience that are cognate with the course for which they are applying and lead tutors to believe that they will be successful on the programme. Where PSRB (professional, statutory and regulatory bodies) may have specific requirements for admission to a course (e.g. teacher training would need to have an enhanced DBS check) these will be clearly stated.

² <https://www.ucas.com/file/233016/download?token=6dAVLopd>

³ <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/admissions-recruitment-and-widening-access>

3.3 A student may be awarded credit for prior learning (certified, experiential or uncertified) towards the requirements of a named award, up to 50% of the total credit requirements for that award. Students entering a validated qualification level 6 'top-up' programme, comprising 120 credits and designed to build on a lower credit bearing award, may not enter the programme with credit. Credit for prior learning (certified, experiential or uncertified) is not allowed at the final stage (credit level 6) of a Bachelor's Degree or for the thesis/dissertation module (Applicants should refer to the [HE Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#) for details and requirements).

3.4 The College makes decisions on how many offers should be made on full time programmes based on the College's targets. Targets for recruitment on each programme are based on the number of places available.

3.5 The College's Admissions team is based in the Learning Exchange. They are responsible for processing applications via UCAS (full-time programmes) and via the College Applications Management System (part-time programmes) and via the DfE Apply service (full-time postgraduate teacher training). It is their responsibility to enter accurate data onto the College's database and pass applications to academic staff for decisions. They will, when requested, arrange interviews or auditions for students in consultation with academic staff.

3.6 Once academic staff have made a decision it is the responsibility of the Admissions team to convey this decision to the student either directly or through UCAS or the DfE Apply service. Students may be made an unconditional offer, a conditional offer or rejected. If academic staff reject a student they must make clear to the admissions team the grounds on which they have made this decision and, where appropriate, suggest an alternative course of study that an applicant might wish to undertake.

3.7 The Admissions Team will keep a copy of all rejections, together with the reasons for rejection for a period of 12 months from the date of the decision. This will enable the College to give any unsuccessful candidate any explanation of how the decision was reached. Staff must be aware that they may be challenged by unsuccessful applicants.

3.8 The Dean of University Centre will monitor unsuccessful applications to ensure equality and consistency and to establish whether, wherever possible, staff have discussed alternative provision with them.

3.9 Applicants are advised to monitor their application via UCAS Track, the DfE Apply service or the College applications portal. If they do not meet the terms of the offer, they may still be accepted onto the programme they applied for or another programme. If they are not accepted, they may be able to apply to other institutions via clearing.

3.10 Applicants may apply and ask for their place to be deferred for one year. They may do this when they apply or in the year leading up to their start date. If they wish to defer again, they need to reapply.

3.11 All formal correspondence directed to applicants and received from applicants must be sent through the Admissions team.

3.12 In the event of an offer being made for a course still in the pre-validation stage, any advertising materials and any offers must make this clear.

3.13 Where a programme does not run or where there are significant changes to a programme between the offer being made and the student commencing the programme the Admissions team will advise the applicant of this and the options available to them.

3.14 Admission to a programme is based on the academic judgement that the student should be able to fulfil the learning outcomes, with support, if appropriate. Students with disabilities or learning difficulties are strongly urged to disclose these during the application process so that suitable support arrangements can be made before the student starts the course. The College may require further information to determine the level of support needs. Where required, reasonable adjustments will be made to assessment methods used in the selection process to ensure the provision of equal opportunities for applicants with disabilities or learning difficulties is met.

3.15 Where entrance to a programme is dependent upon demonstrating a competency standard then the standard must be:

- Appropriate and necessary
- Applied equally to disabled and non-disabled applicants
- A proportional means to achieving a legitimate aim

3.16 Where a student does not disclose a disability or learning difficulty until close to the start of the programme, and the requisite support cannot be put in place in time, the College may defer the offer of a place.

3.16 Where an applicant declares a criminal conviction on an application form or at a subsequent point in the application and/or enrolment process, the [HE Procedure for Students and Potential Students with Criminal Records](#) will apply and disclosures will be dealt with securely, consistently and fairly.

3.17 Applicants are responsible for providing the College with accurate information on which it will make admissions decisions. Any student found to have provided false information or to have plagiarised their personal statement are at risk of having an offer withdrawn or being asked to leave the programme.

3.18 Students from the European Union and the European Economic Area and Swiss Citizens who are applying for courses must be able to evidence that they have pre-settled or settled status and/or meet the residency requirements to live and study in the UK.

3.19 Students from outside of the UK will need to obtain a Student Visa via the UK Border Agency. They will need to have English language skills appropriate to the course, both to assure admissions

staff of their suitability for the course and to support their visa application. The College are unable to sponsor visas for international students.

3.20 A student who takes up a place with the College will receive joining instructions that include an invitation to enrolment, guidelines for students and ways to travel to the College. In the first two weeks of the programme, they will undergo a formal induction process that will cover student welfare, personal tutorial support, learning support services, library services and study skills.

4. Complaints and Appeals

4.1. An applicant who is not satisfied with the way in which the College has dealt with their application may submit a complaint or appeal using the [HE Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy](#) available on the College website. Appeals must be initiated within four weeks of the date of the original decision.

4.2. Appeals and complaints from applicants regarding the admissions processes are covered by the [HE Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy](#) under the following circumstances: (a) The college has not followed its own admissions policy (b) the entry criteria were not applied.

4.3. A complaint is the expression of a concern about a procedure or administrative process and can be lodged at any stage of admissions, recruitment and widening access processes. An appeal is a request for a review of a decision concerning selection or admission and can be lodged only after such a decision has been made.

4.4. Appeals will not be considered if they are about matters of academic judgment regarding an applicant's suitability to study a programme, or are submitted anonymously, or are about an applicant's failure to satisfy non-academic requirements.⁴

4.5. If a complaint or appeal is received from a parent, teacher, other adviser or relevant person, we must have written permission from the applicant to discuss their application with this third party.

4.6. Wherever possible, we advise that students attempt to resolve concerns about the admissions process informally in the first instance by contacting the Admissions team: admissions@liv-coll.ac.uk Applicants who are concerned about the reasons for an unsuccessful application should, before appealing, contact the Admissions team for feedback about the reason for the decision.

4.7. Formal complaints or appeals should be submitted to complaints@liv-coll.ac.uk or by completing the online form here: bit.ly/COLC-Feedback and will be investigated in accordance with the [HE Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy](#).

⁴ Except in respect of Criminal Records which will be considered under the *HE Procedure for Students and Potential Students With Criminal Records*

4.8. If a decision is made to uphold an appeal, the matter will be referred back to the Admissions team to reconsider the application.

4.9. Applicants are not normally able to refer a complaint about admissions to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIAHE).

5. Policy approval and updating

5.1. This policy should be kept under periodic review that is informed by analysis of recruitment by age, ethnicity and disability and the progression, retention and completion rates of students on different programmes and with different entry profiles.

6. Related Policies

5.1. The [HE Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#) provides more detail regarding Recognition of Prior Learning and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning and the evaluation process that the teaching team undertake in the mapping of learning outcomes.

The following policies are available via the College's website: <https://www.liv-coll.ac.uk/study-at-the-college/higher-education/he-policies-and-procedures/>

- HE Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
 - HE Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy
 - HE Procedure for Students and Potential Students with Criminal Records
 - HE Terms and Conditions
 - Student Protection Plan
 - Access and Participation Plan
 - Tuition Fees, Course Cancellation and Refund Policy
 - Fee Summaries
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Appendix 1: Admissions Process Overview for Students

