

ADMISSIONS POLICY

1. PURPOSE

This policy outlines the College's practice for managing the admissions of students to the college. This includes appeals. The policy aims to provide a fair and consistent procedure for admissions. The policy is also linked with college publications such as the College prospectus, website, course leaflets and other marketing materials.

2. SCOPE

This policy covers admissions for applicants to all College courses and apprenticeships including those delivered at partner organisations.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1. Responsibilities

- 3.1.1. The Assistant Principal, Schools Liaison and Marketing is responsible for overseeing admissions to full-time and part-time courses.
- 3.1.2. The Head of Employer Services is responsible for overseeing admissions to apprenticeships and partner organisations.
- 3.1.3. The Schools Liaison, Marketing, Admissions and Employer Services teams are responsible for ensuring that the necessary procedures are followed to ensure that the College's entry requirements are applied correctly, consistently, and fairly for all applicants.
- 3.1.4. All staff involved in enrolment are responsible for following the College's entry requirements consistently and fairly with respect to all student enrolments.
- 3.1.5. Heads of School are responsible for overseeing any second stage interview processes relevant to their curriculum areas.
- 3.1.6. Students with complex backgrounds that may place themselves, other learners or staff at risk may be requested to complete the College's PCCS (Potential Cause for Concern Student) application that is managed through our Programme Management Team.
- 3.1.7. The Head of Inclusion and Learning Support and Programme Areas Leads for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are responsible for attending EHCP reviews, the EHCP consultation process and supporting curriculum areas with second stage interviews and planning curriculum and teaching adjustments.

3.2. Entry Requirements

- 3.2.1. The entry requirements for each course can be found on the Riverside College and Cranton Sixth Form College websites. Each course will have a course factsheet with details of entry requirements and course content. The prospectus will provide an overview of subject areas.
- 3.2.2. Students aged 16-18 who do not achieve grade 4 or above in GCSE English and maths prior to starting College are required by the Government to study towards re-sitting these qualifications while on programme.
- 3.2.3. Entry criteria may be varied at the discretion of the Head of School particularly where experience may be deemed to stand in place of certification.

- 3.2.4. Existing College students applying to undertake a further programme of study are required to fulfil the relevant internal entry criteria, including an acceptable record of meeting College standards, attendance, and punctuality. Existing students will follow the internal progression process.
- 3.2.5. Existing students returning to college after a break in learning will be required to fulfil the relevant entry criteria and obtain a positive reference from their previous tutor or Head of School if the tutor is no longer at the College, and the relevant Programme Manager.
- 3.2.6. Further differentiation of admissions processes will take place where appropriate to:
- Complete the consultation process for students with an Education and Health Care Plan to ensure the College is able to meet the needs of the applying learner.
 - Identify inclusion and learning support needs to explore any adjustments required for students with learning difficulties and disabilities.
 - Make reasonable adjustments to the admissions process to meet the exceptional circumstances of some applicants, where possible.
 - Identify wellbeing and pastoral needs of applicants to ensure support is in place when they start college.
 - Obtain references for applicants who are non school leavers (17 year olds), home schooled or educated in alternative provision and ensure they attend a programme management interview with our pastoral team to determine if the needs of the student can be met within our provision.
 - When offering places / reviewing applications the college will also take into account the following before deciding if the college can meet the needs of the applicant, and that the college setting and offer is in the best interests of the applicant:
 - Current education setting
 - Current attendance levels
 - Level of independence
 - Behaviour and attitudes
 - Travel route and time taken to access the college
 - Advice from external agencies working with the student
 - Safety of all students and staff
 - Rationale for choosing the course and/or college
 - Recent study, for example if an applicant has completed one year of a 2-year programme and has been unable to complete it but is applying to re start the same type of qualification and/or subject

3.3. Advice and Guidance

- 3.3.1. The College offers unbiased advice and guidance on the College's courses to all prospective students. This may take place over the phone, during events held both at college and out in the community, and during admissions interviews.
- 3.3.2. Students will be offered places on courses if it is felt that the College can offer an appropriate course and one that the applicant can reasonably be expected to achieve. This offer is based on the information provided to the College during the admissions process and all applicants are expected to be open and honest. For all courses with formal entry requirements, students are expected to provide evidence that they meet those entry requirements at enrolment in order to secure their place on the course offered.
- 3.3.3. Applicants for whom there is not a suitable course available at Riverside College or Cronton Sixth Form College can be referred to the Advice Careers and Employability Team within the College for advice, and any appropriate external agencies and partners.

- 3.3.4. For courses requiring an interview, these interviews will be undertaken by the central admissions team to ensure a common approach and equal access. During this interview applicants should be open and honest, providing as much relevant information as possible to enable the central admissions team to offer them a place and/or refer the applicant to a second stage process or any appropriate support teams to further their application. Disclosure of an EHCP is essential at application and/or interview stage in order for the college to consult on an EHCP (see section 3.6).
- 3.3.5. The College has the right to refuse any application it considers inappropriate relating to subject choice and applicant history. Any applications received that raise concern will be discussed and a response will be made to the applicant. This includes applications that may place staff or students at risk, and those that the college believe not to be in the best interests of the applicant.
- 3.3.6. For applicants with an EHCP, consultation with the Commissioning Local Authority must take place before the applicant can be offered a place, to ensure that the College is able to meet the needs of the applicant on their chosen course (see section 3.6).
- 3.3.7. Where appropriate the College's Fitness for Study Policy will be considered and applied when considering an applicant's suitability for a course.

3.4. Disclosure of Criminal Convictions/DBS Process

- 3.4.1. Any applicant or student who discloses a conviction will be asked to meet with the relevant Programme Manager who will decide if the applicant/student needs to be risk assessed. Those identified as needing this assessment will be considered by a panel consisting of the Senior Management Team, the College's designated Safeguarding person and a further agreed member of the management team. This could lead to a change of course, seeking appropriate references or withdrawal of the offer of a place.
- 3.4.2. Some courses require a DBS check. The DBS process will be explained to the applicant and the College will be responsible for checking the identity of the applicant prior to the DBS application form being submitted. If the DBS check discloses information of concern the College will discuss the appropriate next steps with each applicant. This could be a change of course, seeking appropriate references or withdrawal of the offer of a place.

3.5. Equality and Diversity

- 3.5.1. 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.
- 3.5.2. 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.
- 3.5.3. The College is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities, including those with learning difficulties, are treated fairly. All reasonable adjustments to provision will be made to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not disadvantaged. High need Funding applications and support needs will be discussed with all eligible applicants. Although an application to an applicant's Local Authority does not automatically mean agreement and that funding will be provided.
- 3.5.4. Whilst the college makes every endeavour to make reasonable adjustments if the needs of the student exceed the skillset and resources of an educational establishment, we retain the right to withdraw the offer and remove from programme.

3.6. Applicants with Health, Disability, Learning Support requirements or Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

- 3.6.1. Any applicant who shares they have an Education and Health Care Plan is referred by the Admissions Team to the Inclusion Team who will write to the Local Authority to inform them that a consultation needs to take place. This Local Authority consultation must be completed before any offer of a course can be made, this is to ensure that the College can meet the needs of the applicant. If the College cannot meet the needs of an applicant with an EHCP this will be communicated to the relevant Local Authority. It is the Local Authorities responsibility to then liaise regarding next steps..

Please note early applications are encouraged to ensure that sufficient time is available to review any EHCP documents and confirm offers in line with the SEND Code of Practice and naming of provision on the plan.

- 3.6.2. Any student who shares a learning difficulty or disability at application or enrolment will be entitled to a conversation about their support needs. A support assessment is completed to create a student centered Inclusive Teaching Plan (ITP). The College will help applicants with learning difficulties/disabilities by helping to assess their learning needs and by providing support where appropriate.

3.7. Availability of Courses

- 3.7.1. Admission is subject to places on courses being available. Application deadlines are published on the college websites.
- 3.7.2. If at enrolment an applicant does not meet the entry requirements of the course they have been offered, the college will endeavour to offer an alternative course at the right level for the applicant; as long as there places are available on suitable courses.
- 3.7.3. The College reserves the right to withdraw an offer or close a course for operational reasons or if there are insufficient student numbers. Applicants will be informed as soon as possible, and refund will be made where applicable in accordance with the College's Fees Policy.
- 3.7.4. Any student who shares they have an Education and Health Care Plan is referred to the Inclusion Team to complete the consultation confirming whether the College can accommodate their needs and secure funding (see sections 3.6.2).

3.8. Course Fees

- 3.8.1. Details of fees can be found:
- on the College website
 - in the College prospectus
 - by calling the Admissions Team or
 - by attending an Open Event at the College.
- 3.8.2. Fees must be paid in accordance with the College's Fees Policy.
- 3.8.3. The College reserves the right not to admit a learner who has any outstanding debts to the College.

3.9. Responsibilities and Obligations of Applicants

- 3.9.1. Applicants are responsible for providing accurate information to Riverside College and Cronton Sixth Form College and their partners at all stages of the application process. Any applicant found to be providing fraudulent or false information will have any offer made withdrawn.
- 3.9.2. For students with an EHCP or SEN, SENCOs or parents and carers are encouraged to share any relevant documents, including annual review paperwork. For any applicant with an EHCP the Local Authority must consult with the college prior to an offer being made.

3.9.3. Applicants are expected to:

- inform the College directly if they decide to not to accept the offer
- provide information regarding their circumstances and declare criminal convictions
- treat all College staff and students respectfully
- agree to follow all College policies and procedures once admitted to college as a student.

3.10. Appeals Process

3.10.1. Applicants have the right to appeal against any decision taken during the application process.

3.10.2 An admissions appeal could be invoked as a result of a variety of decisions including in respect of:

- An applicant who has previously withdrawn from a college course and wishes to return.
- An application that may require a risk assessment, for example due to any previous record or behaviour, which could pose a threat to staff or students.
- The outcome of an interview.
- An applicant who it is considered presents an unacceptable safeguarding risk.

This list is not exhaustive or exclusive and other situations may arise which necessitate an Admissions Appeal.

3.10.2. Appeals should be made in writing addressed to the 'Assistant Principal Quality, Admissions Appeal Panel.'

3.10.3. Once an appeal has been received, the College will acknowledge the appeal in writing.

The admissions appeal panel will consider the appeal and respond in writing within three days of the conclusion.

4. MONITORING AND REVIEW

4.1. Monitoring of Admissions

All admissions activity is monitored regularly through SMT (Senior Management Team) Monitoring reports, Modelling Numbers Meetings, Enrolment Meetings, Progression Meetings, and activity is mapped against the Matrix standard for advice and guidance which is monitored in an annual review.

NOTE: THIS POLICY ALSO LINKS TO THE FITNESS TO STUDY POLICY