



## **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

This policy outlines the United Colleges Group position on the admission of applicants for all programmes.

(for City of Westminster College and the College of North West London)

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## **Admissions Policy**

The United Colleges Group welcomes applications from all individuals with the motivation to learn and the potential to succeed. We are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all individuals seeking a place on a programme of study. No applicant will be refused admission on the grounds of; age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, however, the Group does reserve the right to recruit appropriately to age related provision and, in particular in specific 16-18 or adult areas.

### **It is the intention of this policy to:**

- Ensure that staff making admission decisions are equipped with the required judgments and competency to undertake such a role and responsibility
- Ensure accuracy of promotional activities, the relevancy and accessibility of information that will enable applicants to make an informed decision
- Ensure selection policies and procedures are clear, impartial and more so inclusive to all applicants with entry requirements, both academic and non-academic are used to underpin such judgement during selection
- Ensure impartial advice and guidance is delivered to meet the demands of the individual

The United Colleges Group of Colleges operates an open Admissions Policy that ensures fair, transparent and equitable treatment of all applicants and is committed to providing a flexible, high quality teaching and learning environment, focused on supporting students in achieving their full potential. The College Group believes in a student body that is diverse in terms of background and experience, with all students contributing to a stimulating learning environment.

### **The applicant will be offered a place provided that:**

- The Group offers a programme suitable to meet their needs
- They meet the entry requirements at the point of enrolment for the level of provision they have applied for. In some cases, further information may be requested from the applicant's school or previous place of learning to assist in our evaluation of their suitability of a place on a chosen course. In extraordinary circumstances applicants may be requested to provide additional evidence of their suitability for a course.
- There are spaces available on the course.
- For applicants who declare that they have a criminal record or there are safeguarding concerns for other members of the college community, their

placement will be subject to a risk assessment completed by the Community Liaison Officer following receipt of additional information which may include a Criminal Record Disclosure provided by the applicant.

**Circumstances in which a place may not be offered:**

- Applicants who declare they have been living outside of the UK for the last 3 years will be asked to bring their passport and any visa documentation and this will be checked by a college representative.
- Where the applicant has declared a criminal record or pending court case and the risk assessment leads to the conclusion that they pose too great a risk to grant admission.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern for a member of the College community.
- If the applicant has previously been excluded from this or another educational institution.
- If the Group is unable to provide a suitable learning programme or the applicant is not academically or vocationally suitable, and the stated entry criteria will not be met and no reasonable alternative offer can be made.
- Applicants who have outstanding debts to the Group.
- Applicants for programmes that require a DBS police check, such as Childcare courses. The outcome of the check will be taken into account.
- Failure to declare a criminal record may lead to the immediate withdrawal of any offer of a place. This duty to declare is ongoing for the duration of the student's time at the Group. For enrolled student's failure to declare may result in the student being excluded under the College's Student Disciplinary Procedures.
- We may ask applicants who have indicated a recent recurring or significant health condition to provide a medical report on their condition. These reports do not form part of the selection process and will only be shared with relevant key professionals within the college. The nominated member of staff for Disability is responsible for advising on reasonable adjustments for students with learning difficulties and disabilities, in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- If an applicant is in the possession of an Education and Healthcare Plan the suitability of the course, for which they applied, will be discussed with the relevant curriculum team in conjunction with the Disability Officer

In general, a 16-18 year old will follow a course which is usually a single qualification aim; a programme of study and is usually a collection of courses. Both can be studied either fulltime (540 hours or more) or part-time (less than 540 hours). A 16-18 year old student will be expected to be studying a full-time study programme unless they are; employed, completing an apprenticeship or following a recognised traineeship. A student with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) has funded study up to and including the age of 25 years as long as they are able to demonstrate that

they are progressing in their learning. Adult students will have a variety of programme lengths depending on the type of course or programme applied for.

## **Admissions Procedures:**

### **Stage 1 Pre-application**

There will be clear written entry criteria for every course. Entry requirements will be determined and published for respective levels of study. However, each course will have a clear statement on entry requirements, and this will be displayed in the course information provided on each individual College website.

Opportunities for students to view each respective College within the group and its facilities prior to the commencement of a course will be organised by holding; Open Days, Advice and Guidance sessions, the interview and Welcome Days. Please check each College website for further details.

Open Days allow prospective applicants the opportunity to see each College's curriculum offer and to establish a wider understanding of its culture and objectives.

Advice and Information is available from each College with qualified careers advisors available to answer any questions students may have about their future study and options.

### **Stage 2 - Application stage**

All applicants must have an application form in order to be considered. All applicants that meet the entry criteria for full time courses or part time programmes where an interview is required will be interviewed. At the interview, the Student's programme choice will be discussed, and a provisional agreement reached on the most appropriate programme of study.

Any applicant with a need for support will be required to have a meeting with the Student Assessment and Support Services to ascertain the level of support required. The offer of a place is subject to the college being able to meet the applicant's needs.

Applicants with any outstanding debts to the College Group either financial or material will be required to clear these debts before their application is progressed.

The College Group may request references and/or school reports for a potential student where necessary.

Students must provide the information to allow Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks to be made prior to entry on courses for all work experience providers and employers; for example: in areas such as Teaching Assistants, Early Years and Health and Education programmes. This is to ensure that students have every chance to gain work experience opportunities and employment in their career choice at the end of the programme.

Existing College students wishing to undertake a further programme of study will follow the current students' progression policy but are required to fulfil the relevant entry criteria to progress.

### **Stage 3 - Offer**

All offers of places and enrolments at the United Colleges Group are made on the basis of:

- There being sufficient demand for the course offered
- There being sufficient spaces available on the course concerned
- Meeting the published entry requirements of the chosen programme
- Suitable references and checks as required

Where College staff identify that a student is unsuitable for their particular programme, they will refer them for another interview or a guidance interview by completing the College's interview paperwork.

All interview paperwork not resulting in an offer must be forwarded to the Support Services/Admissions Team at each College at the end of each interview session in order for alternatives to be considered and appropriate advice and guidance provided.

Disabled applicants and applicants with learning difficulties may access appropriate support. Applicants are encouraged to declare as early as possible but can declare at any stage of the application process, on declaration they will be referred to a member of the Additional Learning Support or Student Support Team.

Applicants who have declared on their application that they are a non-EU/EEA National or have lived outside of the EU/EEA in the past three years will need to provide evidence of their status with regards to immigration and permission to reside in the UK. Information collected in the admission and enrolment processes will adhere to the current legislation concerning data protection and the College Group's Data Protection Policy.

## **Appeals Process**

Applicants who wish to appeal against any decision during the admissions process should contact the Head of Marketing & Admissions. All appeals should be made in writing within 10 days. Assistance with this will be provided if required on request. The Head of Admissions, or a nominated representative will collate all relevant evidence for review. This evidence should include:

- Appeal letter
- Application form
- Interview Records
- Any other relevant information such as references etc.

The Head of Admissions or a nominated representative will assess the evidence and the applicant will be notified in writing of the panel's decision within 10 working days.

The decision of the Head of Marketing and Admissions is final. A record of the panel discussion and decision with specific reasons will be retained in admission.

## 14-16 Provision

14-16 Provision is part of United Colleges Group. The provision offers a high-quality learning experience to young people for whom a full time KS4 school provision has not been successful. The 14-16 College provision is focused on providing excellence in learning balanced with high levels of student support. The 14-16 provision has been created in line with the local need to provide educational placements for KS4 learners looking to study in a variety of subjects, including English and maths.

United College Group is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all 14-16 that will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that all applications are managed in a manner that is clear, fair, explicit and consistent
- All places are offered and allocated in accordance with the Group's 14-16 Provision Admissions Policy

The admission arrangements for the 14-16 Provision will explain:

- How applications to the College should be made and the process for applicants (via borough or school)
- How places will be allocated
- Key criteria for successful transition to the College's post-16 provision

The College's 14-16 Provision is not limited to any capped admissions number. It is anticipated that the College will have groups that will enable efficient delivery that will provide a stimulating and rewarding learning experience. The space occupation of the sites will be taken into account when allocating places.

Arrangements for application for places at the College's 14-16 Provision at year 10 and 11 should be made directly to pupil admissions at the London Boroughs of Brent. The College offers multiple entry points throughout the academic year at KS4.

Interested young people and their parents/carers will be invited to participate in a tour and interview at the College to discuss individual needs and the curriculum offer. Only once an application is received and an interview has taken place, will consideration be given to an offer of a place – this supports both the College and the student.

Interview and induction will enable students to learn more about their programme of study and they will receive personalised guidance and support. Following enrolment all students will participate in the College of North West London 14-16 Provision induction process, which includes personal guidance, support and progression planning.

## **14-16 Students Progression and Appeals Process**

We would expect current students to progress and they should be encouraged to do so. The conditions to progress will be the same as those for external applicants. If students meet the published entry criteria there will be no barriers to progression.

Key Criteria for successful transition to the College post 16 Programmes of Study:

- Student attendance, behaviour and effort at their current school must demonstrate a positive attitude to education.
- Skills in English and mathematics must be adequate to study within the chosen vocational areas.
- Internal progression to be completed with the student and personal tutor. Students will be invited in for an interview towards the end of the academic year to prepare for transition.

Parents/carers or students whose application for a place is unsuccessful are entitled to appeal. This appeal can be made via the school or borough or the Independent Appeals Panel which will act in accordance with the provisions of the 'Schools Admissions Appeal Code' published by the Department for Education.

Information on how to appeal will be provided with the confirmation that an application has been declined and can be accessed by contacting the Head of Admissions.

## **Students with Additional Needs**

All students are encouraged to disclose on their application form any medical conditions, learning difficulties or physical or sensory disability so that we can discuss with them how they might be supported in their learning to fulfil their academic potential.

Students with an EHCP will undergo a consultation and, where appropriate, a needs analysis assessment, prior to enrolment.

We expect all declarations to be supported in writing and with independent documentation where required. Applicants will be required to attend a support assessment/interview before their curriculum interview to ensure that appropriate support can be planned and put in place.

All applicants are considered for admission on the basis of their willingness to learn, attitude, educational performance and professional experience that provides evidence of ability to meet the demands of the chosen course.

All applicants will have access to impartial advice and guidance and information about courses, progression and funding upon which appropriate and informed decisions are made.

This policy applies to all applicants (including late applicants) who are seeking admission to United Colleges Group, for any programme of study, Higher Education and those who are already at the College and wish to progress from one programme of study to another.

The college adheres to the principles and expectations as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice. The full SEND Code of Practice can be found at the following link; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

## **Applicants and Students with Criminal Records**

The United Colleges Group does not wish to debar individuals with criminal records from taking advantage of the opportunities provided by further education. In general, a criminal record is not to be regarded as an obstacle to studying at the College Group. In any event, the College Group will not take into account, when dealing with existing students and selecting applicants for admission, criminal convictions which are deemed "spent" under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 unless such convictions are deemed as "exceptions" under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. If spent offences are required to be disclosed this will always be indicated on the application form.

If a criminal conviction is deemed as 'unspent' then the procedure for handling applicants and students with criminal records must be followed.

If a criminal conviction is deemed as 'spent' then the standard admissions procedure as outlined below will be followed.

If at any stage an applicant/student fails to disclose accurate information on their past criminal record, then this will be regarded as an extremely serious matter and may lead to any offer being withdrawn; if the applicant has commenced their programme of study, the student may be required to cease their studies.

## **Higher Education Admissions Procedures**

The United Colleges Group complies with all relevant Consumer Market Authority (CMA) legislation.

### **Stage 1 Application**

- Applying via UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service)
- To apply for a Higher Education Programme at United Colleges Group, applicants must apply online through UCAS, the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service at <http://www.ucas.com>
- The Higher Education information pages on respective College websites will assist the applicant in locating college Higher Education programmes on the UCAS site (including UCAS and Institution codes)

### **There are two types of applicant:**

#### **Students at a school or college registered with UCAS**

All UK schools and colleges (and a small number of establishments overseas) are registered with UCAS to manage their students' applications. Advice is available from teaching staff or a careers adviser at the school or college. Students fill in an online application and submit it to a member of staff. After checking their details, and adding their academic reference, the school or college submits the completed application online to UCAS.

The student must pay online using a credit card or debit card before sending it to a referee. Payment can sometimes be made through the school or college.

#### **Independent applicants in the UK**

Other UK applicants, who are not at school or college, apply online independently. It is likely that they will be a mature applicant, who, unlike school and college students, cannot readily seek advice from a teacher, but can instead consult with various careers organisations. Students are responsible for paying the correct application fee, for obtaining and attaching an academic reference and for submitting the completed application online to UCAS.

## Related Policies

- Safeguarding and vulnerable adults
- Mental Health Policy
- Equalities Statement
- Complaints