



ADMISSIONS POLICY (FE)

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

| Owner | Vice Principal |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Date of Approval | 26 January 2026 |
| Date of Next Review | Jan 2027 |
| Approved By | TLS Committee |

United Colleges Group Admissions Policy

1. SCOPE

1.1 This policy outlines the principles followed by United Colleges Group to operate an effective, fair, reliable and inclusive admissions and recruitment process for FE students.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 United Colleges Group welcomes applications from all prospective students. The College will ensure that all applications are considered fairly on an individual basis without discrimination. The College group welcomes a student body that is diverse in terms of background and experience

2.2 United Colleges Group adheres to relevant UK Government funding and eligibility guidelines which are regularly updated and publicly available.

3. United Colleges Group will ensure that all admissions activity complies with the General Data Protection Regulation and the Consumer Protection Act.

4. RESPONSIBILITY OF APPLICANTS IN THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Applicants are expected to:

4.1 Provide accurate information in course applications submitted to the College.

4.2 Respond in a timely manner to any requests for further information from the College (this includes third party references or school reports).

4.3 Communicate any changes to the information originally supplied in their application as soon as possible.

4.4 Learners with an EHCP or learning or other disability should ensure that this information forms part of their application to ensure that the College inclusive learning support team can discuss and support reasonable adjustments where these are needed and that the applicant can be effectively supported both as part of the application process and on course.

4.5 Applicants must apply for qualifications equivalent to their age group (16-18 or 19+)

4.6 Where an applicant applies for a qualification that is not appropriate to their age group (16–18 or 19+), the College will make reasonable attempts to contact the applicant to provide advice and guidance on a suitable

alternative course or programme of study. If the applicant fails to respond to repeated contact attempts by the Admissions Team within a reasonable timeframe, the College reserves the right to withdraw or reject the application on the grounds that the applicant has not engaged with the admissions process.

- 4.7 Applicants are responsible for **regularly checking the applicant portal (ProPortal)** and for ensuring that their **personal and contact details are accurate and kept up to date** throughout the admissions process.
- 4.8 Applicants are responsible for **attending scheduled enrolment appointments** or **notifying the College in advance** if they are unable to attend, and for making reasonable efforts to rearrange the appointment where necessary.
- 4.9 Applicants placed on a waiting list are responsible for **monitoring communications from the College** and may choose to **apply for alternative courses or programmes of study** where appropriate.

5. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COLLEGE IN THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

The college will:

- 5.1 Give all applicants the opportunity to disclose a learning and/or other difficulty or any other barriers to their education

5.2 Offer all potential learners' impartial advice and guidance in order to help individuals decide on the course of study best suited to their needs and aspirations.

5.3 Ensure that all applications are considered fairly and in line with the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

5.4 Issue a clear decision to the applicant, which could be

- a conditional offer (eg conditional upon criteria such as exam results);
- an unconditional offer
- a deferred offer
- a rejection/no offer.
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5.5 If an applicant is not offered a place on a course, they will be given a clear reason and be offered support to explore alternative study options where possible.

5.6 Ensure the applicant is made aware of any fees required. Admission to the College is conditional upon the payment, or agreed arrangements for the payment, of any fees where applicable by the due date.

5.7 Ensure all admissions procedures including assessment and other screening are fair and recognise the specific access needs of the College's diverse community.

5.8 Before withdrawing or rejecting an application on the grounds of non-engagement, the College will make **reasonable attempts to contact the applicant** using the contact details provided in the application. This may include communication by email, telephone, or other appropriate methods, within a reasonable timeframe.

5.9 Submission of an application to United Colleges Group does not constitute enrolment and does not confirm acceptance onto a course or programme of study. The College will not issue confirmation, enrolment, or attendance letters for benefit or funding purposes based solely on an application. Enrolment confirmation documentation will only be issued after an applicant has been formally assessed, accepted, and has completed the full enrolment process, including completion of all required enrolment documentation and verification checks.

5.10 Where an applicant has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the College will work in partnership with the relevant local authority to confirm the most recent EHCP review and that the plan is current and up to date. The College will assess whether it is able to appropriately meet the identified needs of the applicant within available resources and support arrangements. An offer of a place will only be made, and the College will only commit to enrolment, where it is satisfied that the applicant's needs can be reasonably and effectively supported throughout their programme of study.

5.11 The College will provide applicants with access to its online applicant portal (ProPortal), where applicants can view the status and progress of their application, including interview invitations, outcomes, and offers made. Through ProPortal, applicants will be able to accept or decline offers, book interviews where applicable, and update their personal and contact details to ensure accurate and timely communication throughout the admissions process.

- 5.12 Acceptance of an offer by an applicant does not guarantee a place at the College.

A place is only confirmed once the applicant has successfully completed all required assessments and interviews, any applicable fee or funding assessment, and the full enrolment process, including the signing of all relevant enrolment documentation.

- 5.13 Where an applicant is invited to complete enrolment and fails to attend the allocated enrolment appointment, and does not notify the College in advance or make reasonable efforts to reschedule, the College reserves the right to withdraw the offer and allocate the place to another applicant. Due to high demand for some courses, the College is not able to hold places indefinitely, and non-attendance at enrolment may result in the loss of the offered place.

- 5.14 Where a course is full, applicants may be placed on a waiting list.

Applicants on a waiting list will only be contacted if a place becomes available.

The College cannot guarantee when, or if, places will become available, as this is dependent on withdrawals or non-completion of enrolment by other applicants.

If an applicant does not receive further communication from the College, this should be taken to mean that no place has become available at that time.

6. MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT

- 6.1 The College is committed to the provision of timely, clear and consistent messages in its marketing and recruitment information, and to the management of activity, which leads to the inclusive admission of students to the College.

7. CRITERIA FOR ADMISSIONS

7.1 Entry requirements are determined before the proposed point of admission, and are published on the website and will be discussed with/ made clear to applicants. The College reserves the right to amend its entry requirements and/or fees (subject to approval by its validating institution where appropriate) before enrolment.

7.2 Where admission is dependent upon external funding, the College reserves the right to make sure that this funding is secure prior to enrolment.

- 7.3 Admission will be approved providing:

a) The applicant meets ESFA/GLA ASF/HEFCE eligibility criteria,

where applicable

- b) The applicant satisfies all pre-course entry/assessment requirements including completing all paperwork accurately, returning requested forms on time, attending appointments/interviews/assessments where required
- c) The applicant meets the specific entry requirements of the course(s) applied for
- d) Approval from the relevant curriculum staff is received by the admissions team.
- e) Satisfactory references and/or school reports are received, if requested.
- f) There is sufficient demand to run the course, and space available on the course or programme of study
- g) In the case of an apprenticeship or other study where employment is a required part of the programme, that appropriate employment is secured
- h) A satisfactory DBS check has been provided where required (eg Early Years)
- i) Where learners are fully or co-funded or have other fee remittance, the applicant must provide all relevant evidence and documentation as required by the funding agencies
- j) Any other specific requirements, as noted in individual course information, are met

7.4 To be officially enrolled a learner must have completed and signed relevant and up to date enrolment documentation and committed to the appropriate fee. Only learners who have completed the enrolment process are considered enrolled students for all official, funding, and reporting purposes.

7.5 Acceptance of an offer alone does **not** constitute enrolment.

8. APPLICATIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION COURSES

8.1 Higher education Admissions procedures can be found as an adjunct to this admissions policy.

9. APPLICATIONS FOR STUDENTS UNDER THE AGE OF 16

9.1 All applicants must be 16 or over on 1st September of the academic year in which they wish to start their study. 14-16-year-old learners will not be given place at the college and should ensure they contact the relevant local education authority for advice on school admissions. Any requests for group specific 14-16 provision will solely considered at the bequest of the local authority, will be directly funded by the local authority and carried out in partnership.

10. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

10.1 An international student is a one who does not qualify as a Home Student. International students are charged fees at a higher rate to reflect the full cost of their individual learning programme.

United Colleges group is not licensed to sponsor students under the student route and short-term study visa following UKVI (UK Visas and Immigration) regulations and so does not accept applications from international students on this route.

11. ENTRY CRITERIA

11.1 The College accepts a wide range of qualifications from UK applicants as entry criteria for its courses. The College will verify the result of any qualification. Applicants will be required to present original results slips/ certificates as part of the enrolment process.

11.2 For some programmes and courses, applicants will also be asked to take an initial screening or course specific assessment. The purpose of this is to assess the applicant's level (of maths and/or English or a skill where the course is skills-based) in order to place the student on an appropriate level of course.

11.3 Applicants who have previously taken qualifications outside the UK should present evidence of their previous qualifications to enable the College to compare their equivalency using NARIC or similar processes.

11.4 For some 19+ courses previous qualifications are not necessary and applicants' ability or suitability will be assessed via initial screening or course specific assessment prior to acceptance on the course.

11.5 The College may request a reference or report from an applicant's previous school or other relevant referee showing their suitability to follow a programme of study at United Colleges Group.

11.6 Applicants wishing to be considered for entry to the second or third year of study, or wishing to import credits or evidence of prior learning into the course for which they are applying, will be considered in accordance with the relevant awarding bodies policy on Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning.

11.7 Students progressing within the College (to the next year, a higher level of study or to another course or subject) must have a positive record of study at the college, and have passed the relevant qualifications and assessments for progression.

11.8 It is possible for a student's level to be changed after the point of enrolment, should the curriculum team further assess that this is necessary. This will be discussed with the student.

12. DISCONTINUATION OR SUSPENSION OF COURSES

12.1 The College reserves the right to discontinue or suspend a course including where offers have already been issued, or students enrolled but will only do this in exceptional circumstances.

12.2 Where a course is discontinued, applicants holding offers or enrolled students will be informed as soon as possible, and where possible and appropriate, will be offered a place on an alternative course offered by the College or alternatively supported by the College advisers.

13. RIGHT TO REFUSE AN APPLICATION

13.1 The College reserves the right to refuse admission, at the college's discretion and after full consideration by a senior manager, to an applicant who:

- a) Does not meet the admission criteria and no alternative course offer can be provided
- b) Is not able to provide a reference or report indicating an appropriate

commitment to study where this is requested.

- c) Withholds information or provides false or misleading information
- d) Has convictions that have not been spent or can never become spent
- e) Has previously been excluded from any of the Colleges in United Colleges Group or another educational institution
- f) Has previously attended this or another education establishment and not completed courses, including all external assessments.
- g) Has outstanding debts to any of the Colleges in United Colleges Group
- h) Showed behaviour at interview or as part of the applicant journey that causes significant doubt about the applicant's ability to adhere to the expected standards of behaviour needed for learning.
- i) Poses a significant threat or danger to others. United Colleges Group recognises it has a duty of care to students and staff and reserves the right not to admit an applicant where there is evidence that they could be a risk, following a safeguarding risk assessment.
- j) Where it is found after enrolment that a student is in breach of any conditions outlined above they can be withdrawn under the terms of the 'Admissions Policy'

14. SAFEGUARDING RISK ASSESSMENT

14.1 Applicants are encouraged to alert the College of any reason or circumstance that may affect their attendance, safety and wellbeing, or the safety and wellbeing of other students or users of the college. The College reserves the right to conduct a Risk Assessment based on any information declared. This will be taken into consideration by the Safeguarding Lead, or Deputy/ Vice Principal when making a decision about admitting an individual to the College.

15. APPEALS

15.1 Applicants who wish to appeal against any decision made during the admissions and enrolment process should contact the College via email complaints@ucg.ac.uk with the subject line - **admissions appeal** within 5 working days of the decision being communicated. The College will make every reasonable effort to respond to the appeal within 10 working days of acknowledgement. Where a response is likely to take longer than 10 working days the College will provide an interim update. The Vice/Deputy Principal or their nominated representative will assess the evidence and the applicant will

be notified in writing of the decision.

The decision of the Vice/Deputy Principal is final



HE Admissions Policy (Adjunct of UCG Admissions Policy)

2025/26

UKPRN: 10001476

| Owner | Vice Principal (HE) |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Date of Approval | 26 January 2026 |
| Date of Next Review | January 2027 |
| Approved By | TLS Committee |

1. Introduction

The HE Admissions Policy is an adjunct of the UCG Admissions Policy 2025. Though operational differences will be addressed, the adjunct shares in the representation of UCG's values and strategic themes evident within the UCG Admissions Policy 2025.

The purpose of the HE Admissions Policy is to ensure a fair, reliable, and inclusive HE admissions system, with support available to students or applicants throughout the admissions cycle.

The policy applies to all students or applicants for Level 4 and above programmes across the group. UCG offer a range of HE programmes with a range of accrediting bodies and validating partners.

The HE Admissions Policy is written in accordance with the Competition and Markets Authority HE Providers guide on Consumer Protection Law (March 2015), the Equality Act (2010), and Office for Students (OfS) guidance. The policy reflects our HE Terms and Conditions, Access and Participation, and Student Protection plans. The policy will be reviewed regularly in consultation and collaboration with students through student, management, and governing bodies.

2. Admissions Procedures

UCG offer a range of HE programmes with a range of admissions requirements and protocols. The HE Admissions Policy is in place to ensure a fair, reliable, and inclusive admissions system, with support available throughout the admissions cycle. The HE Admissions Policy informs HE admissions procedures, which include:

2.1 Pre-application

All information related to our HE courses is available on our websites. Full-time courses will also appear within UCG's UCAS listing.

Level 4 and 5 Apprenticeships are administered by the Business Development Unit and Apprenticeship team. Employers, agents, and apprentices will enquire directly with either college and, where appropriate, apprentices will be admitted on to our HE programmes.

Websites and UCAS will give clear written entry criteria for every course. Entry requirements will differ depending on subject and level of study.

Open days, information and guidance (IAG) sessions, interviews, welcome/open days, and induction will allow applicants the opportunity to see each college's curriculum offer and establish a wider understanding of our HE culture and student experience.

IAG is available from each college via course teams and/or qualified careers advisers, available to answer any questions about future study and employment options.

2.2 Application

Where possible, all fulltime HE applications will be made via UCAS. Applications for part-time, professional, and apprenticeship programmes will be made using the Application Form available on our websites. All applicants must have completed an application form to be considered.

All UCAS application data will be regularly uploaded to ProSolution. All direct application data will be regularly uploaded to ProSolution. Curriculum Managers and course teams will receive regular notification of new applications. All information collected in admission and enrolment processes will adhere to the current legislation concerning data protection, and UCG's Data Protection Policy.

UCAS' equal consideration deadline is in January, however UCG continue to accept HE applications until enrolment in September. UCAS Reject by Default dates are in May and July (for applications made after January deadline). Overseen by Curriculum Managers, course teams are expected to respond promptly to new applications via Student Services or via the Admissions teams, with key response dates in February, April, June and September.

UCG do not currently hold a Tier 4 license and do not recruit international students. The policy will be updated with any changes on this position. International applicants will be provided with appropriate advice and guidance to locate an alternative provider. All applicants requiring fee or settlement status assessment will be identified, referred, and promptly communicated with.

All applicants who meet the entry criteria will be interviewed. Overseen by Curriculum Managers, course teams are expected to arrange, complete, and record interview decisions via Student Services or Admissions teams with key response dates in February, April, June and September. In line with UCG Admission Policy 2025, when declared or appropriate, at any stage in the admissions cycle a student or applicant may be referred to our finance, ALS, or ESOL teams for further support, assessment, or information. UCG adheres to the principles and expectations as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice. Staff may also decide to refer applicants to a different subject, course, or level as appropriate.

Students or applicants 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. 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. In line with UCG Admission Policy 2025, a criminal record is not to be regarded as an obstacle to studying at UCG. UCG will not take into account criminal convictions deemed "spent" under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 unless they are also deemed

“exceptions”. If at any stage an applicant/student fails to disclose accurate information on their past criminal record, this may lead to any offer being withdrawn.

Existing UCG students wishing to undertake a further programme of study will follow the current students’ progression policy but are required to fulfil the procedural differences detailed in the HE Admissions Policy and fulfil the relevant entry criteria to progress.

RPL/APL/APEL is the term used to describe the process for admitting students with prior learning acquired through formal study, work, and experience. Prior Learning entry allows applicants to apply approved credit value to the completion of an appropriate qualification. In turn, Prior Learning students can achieve a higher award by successfully completing the remaining required credits for the new qualification. It should be noted that only achieved credits are used within this process and not any accompanying grade. RPL/APL/APEL applications should be made according to the procedures above, with individual consideration given by the course team, Curriculum Manager and HE Development and Curriculum Manager

2.3 Offer

All application and interview paperwork not resulting in an offer must give clear reasoning for the rejection and be forwarded to Student Services or Admissions teams as appropriate. Staff may also decide to refer applicants to a different subject, course, or level as appropriate.

Offers will be either Conditional (pending completion of qualifications) or Unconditional (based on prior qualifications or experience). Where appropriate, contextual data and information will be used to assess applicants’ prior attainment and potential, in the context of their individual circumstances. This may include:

- UCAS’ contextual data services – these include third party data from public sources about school performance and young participation in higher education rates by neighbourhood (POLAR3, SIMD etc.), as well as UCAS generated statistics, such as an applicant’s MEM quintile commercial sources (e.g. companies that specialise in offering these services)
- Other sources (e.g., direct from government departments / agencies)
- UCG’s own data and research
- Applicants declare contextual information as part of their UCAS Undergraduate application. Crucially, the personal statement and reference also contain contextual information.
- Participation in outreach activities

Where possible, all fulltime HE offers will be made via UCAS. Offers for part-time, professional, and apprenticeship programmes will be made using automated letters from ProSolution.

All UCAS offers will be regularly updated on ProSolution. All offers for direct applications will be regularly updated on ProSolution. A regular Admissions Report will be reviewed by HE management and governing bodies. Curriculum Managers and course teams will receive regular notification of applicant decisions.

All offers to study at UCG are dependent upon the successful continuation of the advertised course, subject to the risks outlined in our Student Protection Plan, such as meeting minimum recruitment figures. Where necessary, UCG will refer or support applicants in applying for a different subject, course, level or institution.

2.4 Appeals Process

Applicants who wish to appeal against any decision during the admissions process should contact complaints@ucg.ac.uk with the subject line 'admission appeal'. All appeals should be made in writing within 10 days. If required, assistance with this will be provided on request. The Vice Principal with oversight of HE or a nominated representative will collate all relevant evidence for review. This evidence should include:

- Appeal letter
- UCAS Record / HE Application Form
- HE Interview Form
- Any other relevant information such as references etc.

The Vice Principal or a nominated representative will assess the evidence and the applicant will be notified in writing of UCG's decision within 10 working days. The decision of is final. A record of the panel discussion and decision with specific reasons will be retained.

Any further complaints should be made through the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for HE (OIA). OIA is the approved independent student complaints scheme for England and Wales. They resolve and monitor individual complaints from students, and work with HE regulators, organisations and providers to share learning past cases. UCG are registered with the OIA as a Band A provider (201-500 students).

3. Communication

UCG are committed to the effective communication of our admissions policy and procedures with our students and applicants through: student consultation on policy, accessible publication of the policy, and transparent, evidence-based implementation of the policy as required.

All UCAS admissions will be regularly updated and uploaded to MIS. All direct application data should be regularly updated and uploaded to MIS. Curriculum Managers and course teams should receive regular notification of new applications. A regular Admissions Report will be reviewed in HEDOP in conjunction with Assistant Principals.

HE Application Form, HE Interview Form, Interview Letter, Offer/Unsuccessful Letters and Referral Letters are standardised according to UCAS procedures and terminology. These will be regularly uploaded and updated to UCAS/MIS as appropriate and stored to create a documented record for each application.

As above, UCG do not currently hold a Tier 4 license and do not recruit international students. International applicants will be provided with appropriate advice and guidance to locate an alternative provider. All applicants requiring fee or settlement status assessment will be identified, referred and promptly communicated with.