

# INTERNAL PROCEDURE

## Title: Admissions Statement and Procedure

**POLICY HOLDER:** Executive Manager

**EXECUTIVE OWNER:** Deputy Principal

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**Further information:** If you have any queries about this policy or procedure, please contact the named policy holder or the College's marketing team on 01603 773 169.

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

### **1.1 Admissions Statement**

The core purpose for City College Norwich is to embrace student learning and success and deliver programmes which inspire, engage and challenge our students and enable them to unlock their full potential.

We aim to be the main entry point to learning and achievement within the locality and to make a major contribution to the economic health, wealth and community life of the region.

City College Norwich aims to provide a curriculum which enables our students to become valuable members of their communities, regardless of age, disability, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, medical condition, religious belief or sexual orientation.

City College Norwich is fully committed to considering applications from prospective students in a consistent manner and without prejudice. The College will ensure effective support provision is in place to allow prospective students to make an informed decision on their choice of programme.

This policy is underpinned by the College's Strategic Framework which details our commitment to value the diversity of our students, staff and the communities we are part of. The College will seek to enhance the self-esteem of all those it serves and to provide a learning and working environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil their potential.

We are clear that correct placement onto an appropriate course of study is an absolute prerequisite for student success. Whilst we aim to offer provision to all applicants, we recognise that for some students the College, its courses or facilities, may not be appropriate. In these cases we will give impartial advice about provision at other colleges, training providers and educational institutions.

## **2.0 SCOPE**

### **2.1 Conditions for Admission to the College**

City College Norwich has two general conditions for admission of students to the College:

- The ability of a student to benefit from, and succeed in, one of the programmes of study that the College offers.
- The proven understanding and willingness of a student to adopt a responsive attitude to all their College commitments.

### **2.2 Monitoring and Review**

The College recognises the need for regular monitoring and review of its practices and procedures. This includes adhering to relevant external quality assurance legislation in relation to Further and Higher Education, such as (but not limited to) the statutory and regulatory requirements as laid down by the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, the Association of Colleges and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

The College Academic Management Board is responsible for ensuring that the necessary action is taken arising from these reviews in order to implement any required improvements.

Additionally any changes in the institutional mission and external factors, including changing patterns in the applicant market, will be taken into consideration in the review process.

### **3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

This procedure is reviewed by the College's Academic Management Board (AMB) on an annual basis. The Academic Management Board is responsible for ensuring that the Admissions Statement and Procedure is disseminated to all staff involved in the recruitment, selection and admission decision-making process and that they are trained and adequately supported to do their job throughout the year should any queries arise in relation to interpreting this procedure.

For clarity, a member of staff responsible for reviewing applications, conducting interviews and for making admission decisions are referred to in this document as Course Tutors; however as this procedure encompasses both further education and higher education admissions processes, the role of Course Tutor may also be known as Admissions Tutor or any other member of the academic staff body involved in the admission decision making process.

### **4.0 CITY COLLEGE NORWICH COMMITMENT TO PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS**

Prospective students will be provided with clear, consistent and accurate information from which to base their decisions. This will include:

- course entry criteria, content, indicative work commitment and methods of assessment;
- entry target qualifications;
- enrolment, awarding body registrations, tuition, examination and any other financial charges associated with a course which a student will have to bear during the course;
- details of grants, loans, subsidies and other financial assistance which may be available to students for childcare, transport, equipment, work experience, accommodation and fees;
- details of the Curriculum Support Services and assistance which is available to students with specific learning requirements;
- opportunities to visit the College and meet with course tutors and guidance staff;
- opportunities to receive impartial advice from College Advisers;
- regular updates on the progress of an individual application;
- where a College course is oversubscribed and the prospective student is placed on a waiting list, they will be updated as to progress (waiting lists are worked in order of application date);
- all applications will be considered consistently, impartially and fully by the relevant subject Course Tutor (please see section 3 above, Roles and Responsibilities).

### **5.0 COURSE APPLICATION**

Applicants are provided with the opportunity to supply information about themselves that is relevant to their application and the proposed course of study via their initial application. This process provides applicants with the opportunity to detail any disability and/or additional support requirements they may have. Details of the College's responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and students' rights and obligations etc are detailed in the College's application form.

#### **5.1 FE Course Application Process**

All applications will be considered consistently, impartially and fully by the relevant Course Tutor. An applicant can expect:

- an acknowledgement or invitation to interview dispatched within 10 working days of receipt of the application, except in exceptional circumstances where we will write to the prospective student to advise when they are likely to hear further (part time evening applicants are not usually interviewed);
- opportunities to discuss any disability or additional support requirements with a suitably qualified Student Adviser;

- an offer of a place on an appropriate course within 10 working days of an interview except in exceptional circumstances where we will write to the prospective student to advise when they are likely to hear further (if an interview is relevant). Where references or further assessments are required from a third party (such as in relation to a person's support needs) and these are not available at the time of the interview, offers may be delayed;
- clear, transparent and informative joining instructions at least 4 weeks before the beginning of a course for applicants who have applied more than 6 weeks prior to the commencement of the course;
- an interview (where relevant and appropriate) which is informative for the College and the potential student. It should provide the opportunity of exploring the applicant's reasons for application, career plans and other factors which may influence the applicant's suitability for the course.

## **5.2 HE Course application process**

All applications for full-time HE programmes must be made via the UCAS online system. Full details of how to apply and help to navigate the UCAS Apply system are available online at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com).

Applicants are responsible for creating their own tracking profile with UCAS, which will enable them to apply to up to 5 higher education institutions, should they so wish.

All applications will be considered consistently, impartially and fully by the relevant Course Tutor. In some instances an applicant may be asked to attend an interview, in which case the HE Office will write to those applicants to advise of the date, time, location and any additional details required for the interview.

All decisions made by the College (conditional/unconditional offers or declined applications) will be processed via UCAS by the set UCAS deadlines. Applicants are expected to respond to offers by the set UCAS deadlines. Failure to respond will result in an offer being retracted via UCAS process 'Decline by Default'.

It may be possible for applicants to add additional choices if they have not used their initial 5 choices, have been rejected from their choices or have received declined offer(s) (UCAS Extra).

Applicants who have received their results but no offers have been received or they have not met the criteria of their conditional offer, will qualify to enter the 'Clearing' process which starts mid-July.

Normally, places will be confirmed by the end of August and applicants will be invited to enrol at the end of August/beginning of September.

Part-time HE Programme applications should be made as per an FE application (see 5.1 above).

### **5.3 International students**

In the case of applications from overseas international students the College will follow the specific procedures outlined in the documents listed below:

- For applicants wishing to study on a points-based student visa we will comply with the Sponsorship rules issued by the Home Office and follow the Points Based System Sponsor Guidance for Educators.
- Further information on how the College manages its processes for student visa International students can be found in the City College Norwich International compliance procedure for Students studying on points-based student visas: Information for College staff.
- For any non-UK applicants resident in the UK and wishing to study with us, we will assess each applicant's eligibility on an individual basis and carry out all necessary checks and record evidence in line with the appropriate Funding Rules e.g. SFA, EFA etc.
- Further information about applying as an overseas international student and details about eligibility including visas, fees, and specific entry criteria applicants should contact the Advice Shop in the first instance.

### **6.0 OFFERS OF PLACE ON A COURSE**

An offer of a place on a course may be conditional or unconditional. If the offer is conditional the conditions will be clear in writing to the applicant. Even if an offer of a place is made, the delivery of the programme is still subject to sufficient actual enrolments being made.

In the event that a programme becomes oversubscribed, the College will explore increasing the number of cohorts available or, where possible, offer a suitable alternative programme.

An offer may be withdrawn if the applicant does not accept it by any deadline stipulated in the offer letter. The College will withdraw an offer if a student submits false or misleading information that was instrumental in securing the offer of a place.

Where an applicant is not given an offer of a place they can request a clear explanation of the reasons and be referred to an adviser.

#### **6.1 Reasons for not offering a student a place**

The following reasons will apply when not offering a student a place on a course:

- The applicant is clearly unable to meet the minimum entry requirements for the course.
- The applicant has provided false or misleading information.
- The applicant does not have the right to stay and study in the UK.
- Following a full investigation (including Disclosure and Barring Service checks where appropriate e.g. teaching, nursing, childcare, health studies) the applicant is found to be unsuitable to work with any relevant groups.
- Judged against the entry requirements of the programme, the applicant is unlikely, in the opinion of the College, to be able to succeed in, or benefit from, attending the programme. (A decision of this nature would, in appropriate cases, be made following a full meeting of, and discussion by, the Admissions and Review Panel).
- If the College has reason to believe that the applicant's presence is likely to endanger other students and/or staff in the College (a decision of this nature would only be made following a full meeting and discussion by the Admissions and Review Panel).

- The provision of the necessary facilities and support would place an unjustifiable demand upon College resources.
- The applicant has previously been excluded from City College Norwich.
- The applicant has outstanding tuition fee debt to the College.
- The applicant has previously enrolled with the College, withdrew and did not complete.
- Insufficient numbers have applied for a course and it is necessary for the College to close or cancel the course. The College will endeavour to inform applicants as soon as they are aware that a course is full or cancelled. The College will endeavour to find a suitable alternative programme.

## **7.0 ADMISSIONS APPEALS/COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

We recognise applicants may wish to ask why their application has not been successful or believe they have cause for complaint. Due to the level of competition for places there will inevitably be occasions where an applicant is disappointed with our decision.

This section outlines the procedure that City College Norwich follows to handle appeals and complaints in relation to Admissions.

Applicants will not be discriminated against in any further application should they make an admissions appeal or complaint. All admission appeals/complaints that are received from applicants are recorded confidentially and monitored as appropriate by the College's Academic Management Board. Whilst following this procedure, information may need to be shared with other persons or organisations, which will be managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

If an applicant is able to present new information relevant to their application, which was unavailable at the time the decision was taken by the Course Tutor not to offer them a place, then the application may be reviewed. Such information should be submitted in writing to the Head of Area.

The Admission Appeals/Complaints Procedure cannot be used where our decision resulted from:

- A failure on the applicant's part to fulfil academic requirements;
- A failure on the applicant's part to fulfil non-academic requirements (for example an unsatisfactory DBS Enhanced Disclosure or an unsatisfactory health check);
- A reference from a third party, such as a provider of a work or training placement which forms an integral part of the course to which the applicant has applied.
- The applicant does not have the right to stay and study in the UK.
- A reference from a previous place of study.
- Appropriate funding being in place.

### **7.1 Initial Assessment of Admissions Appeal/Complaint**

Upon receipt of the written details from the applicant by the relevant FE/HE Administrator an initial assessment of the admission appeal/complaint shall be made and the following action taken:

- If the matters raised by the applicant concern an admissions decision, then action will be taken according to paragraphs 7.2 below.
- If the matters raised by the applicant concern admissions procedural irregularity, then action will be taken according to paragraphs 7.3 below.
- If the matters raised concern a decision relating to an applicant's criminal conviction then action will be taken according to paragraph 8 below.
- If the matters raised concern a decision relating to an applicant's special educational needs then action will be taken according to paragraph 9 below.

The FE/HE Administrator will contact the applicant within 5 working days to acknowledge the receipt of the admissions appeal/complaint, confirm who will be dealing with the investigation and when the applicant can expect to hear from the Head of Area. Investigations are undertaken and normally completed within 15 working days of the receipt of the admissions appeal/complaint. If it is not possible to complete the investigation within 15 working days, you will be contacted by the FE/HE Administrator giving the reasons why and if possible, a date when the investigation is expected to be completed by.

In certain circumstances further information may be requested in order that a decision can be reached and which may result in extending the timeframe outlined above.

## **7.2 Admissions Appeals**

An admissions appeal is defined as a request for a formal review of the outcome of an admissions decision.

7.2.1 City College Norwich will not accept admission appeals from third party or anonymous sources.

7.2.2 An admissions appeal should be raised using form ADMA1 (see Appendix 1 – Form ADMA1 – Admissions Appeal) addressed to the Head of Area, outlining the nature and detail of the appeal.

7.2.3 The Head of Area will review the appeal and confirm whether the appeal has been rejected or upheld. Applicants should note that if the appeal has been rejected on academic grounds they cannot appeal the decision.

## **7.3 Admissions Complaints**

An admissions complaint procedure exists in order that applicants rejected by the College can challenge an admission decision if they have reason to believe that the decision was subject to procedural irregularity, prejudice or bias, or that extenuating circumstances should be, and have not already been, taken into account. The challenge would be dealt with as a form of complaint.

7.3.1 City College Norwich will not accept admission complaints from third party or anonymous sources.

7.3.2 An admissions complaint should be raised using form ADMA2 (see Appendix 2 – Form ADMA2 - Admissions Complaint) addressed to the Head of Area, outlining the nature and detail of the complaint.

7.3.3 The relevant Head of Area will check that all information on the application has been taken into account, that there was no misinterpretation of the information and that procedures were followed correctly.



7.3.4 The relevant Head of Area will review the complaint and confirm whether the complaint has been rejected or upheld.

- In the event that the complaint is upheld the relevant Head of Area will confirm this along with a proposed remedy;
- In the event that the complaint is rejected the relevant Head of Area will confirm the reason for this;
- If you are not satisfied with the response to your admission complaint, you can ask the Principal to reinvestigate;
- Further to the Principal's response, if you are still not satisfied, you may have the right to appeal to an outside organisation. For more information contact: The Executive Office, Room B40, City College Norwich, Ipswich Road, Norwich NR2 2LJ.

## **8.0 DECISIONS CONCERNING CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS**

In the case where a decision to reject an applicant is made in relation to a criminal conviction, a formal route exists whereby an applicant rejected following an assessment of their convictions can apply to the Principal in writing for a review on the grounds of procedural irregularity, prejudice or bias, or extenuating circumstances. Following this review the decision of the Principal is final.

## **9.0 DECISIONS CONCERNING DISABILITY OR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

In the case where the College has not been able to offer a place to an applicant following an assessment of support needs, a formal route exists whereby an applicant can apply to the Principal in writing for a review on the grounds of procedural irregularity, prejudice or bias, or extenuating circumstances. Following this review the decision of the Principal is final.



**Appendix 2 – Form ADMA2 – Admissions Complaint**

Notice of complaint in accordance with the College's Admissions Appeals Procedure

To: The Head of Area, City College Norwich, Ipswich Road, Norwich, NR2 2LJ Full

name:
School Applied to:
Course Applied for:
Contact Details: Address:           Telephone Number:           Email:

**Information regarding the complaint:**

Explain in your own words why you believe procedural irregularity, prejudice or bias, or that extenuating circumstances should be, and have not already been, taken into account and would like to raise an complaint (*we may ask you further questions regarding this prior to a review*)

*Please attach an addition sheet if you require more space.*

I, the undersigned, having read the College's Admissions Appeals Procedure and I confirm that the information given on this form and supporting documents is a true statement.

Signed ..... Date .....

**Please hand this to reception/advice shop, who will record receipt of this request. You should provide any supporting information you wish to be considered with this form. Confirmation of receipt will be acknowledged within 5 working days.**