

PART A: POLICY

1. Introduction

a) Policy Statement

Northern College aims to ensure that admissions systems are consistent, fair and transparent. All members of the College community are of equal value and entitled to receive a high quality service designed to meet their individual needs. To achieve this, the College is committed to providing impartial advice and guidance in its admissions process to help applicants chose a course that is right for them.

The College recognises that each employee and each student has a part to play in creating a tolerant and inclusive community and will not tolerate any form of behaviour or activity that discriminates on the grounds of;

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The College is committed to implementing the Equality Act 2010 and to the fulfilment of its public sector equality duty. The College therefore strives to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The College's recognises that access to educational opportunities can help to combat inequality and its admissions policies seek to facilitate access to education for individuals and groups who have not benefited from education in the past.

The College is committed to ensuring that disabled learners, including those with learning difficulties, are treated fairly. Reasonable adjustments will be made throughout the applications/enrolment process to ensure that they are not disadvantaged.

This policy applies to all further education and higher education learners.

b) Mission

The College's strong and passionate commitment to the advancement of equality of opportunity is embodied in its mission and values.

The College's mission is:

“To provide outstanding adult residential and community education for the empowerment and transformation of individuals and communities”

Its three core values are:

- To inspire excellence
- To value and celebrate diversity
- To promote social inclusion

This admissions policy will support the delivery of the College's mission.

2. Purpose

This policy aims to set out how the College will:

- Provide accurate and up-to-date information about courses
- Provide impartial advice, guidance and support for applicants
- Develop consistent procedures that are simple and free from barriers
- Offer a range of application methods appropriate to its courses
- Promote equality of opportunity and welcome applications from all learners
- Respond to enquiries and applications in a timely manner
- Provide clear guidance to staff who implement the admissions process

Links to other policies/documents

This policy links to:

- General Regulations
- College Admissions Guidelines for staff
- Fees Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Online Safety Policy
- Strategy for Equality and Diversity
- ICT User Policy
- Risk Assessment Procedures

3. Policy Details – how the policy is implemented

a) Promotion of courses

College courses will be promoted through; the short course booklet, course specific information leaflets, internet and newspaper advertisements, the College website and through specific events such as College Open Days or attendance at events and fairs. The College will seek to use positive images of learners that are free from stereotyping and promote learners from all groups in a positive way.

b) Entry requirements

Entry requirements for courses are set out in this College Admissions Policy, College leaflets and other public information sources.

c) Admissions process

The admissions process is tailored to meet the needs of particular courses. For full-time courses and some part-time courses an interview is a fundamental part of this process, providing an opportunity for applicants to find out about the courses and the College. Where entry qualifications are specified, the College will request documentary evidence of examination results.

Interviews will be carried out fairly and consistently. Decisions will be documented and applicants will be informed about interview outcomes in a timely way.

d) Applicants with a disability/learning difficulty

The College encourages applicants to request additional support during the application/enrolment process and once on the course. Applicants who declare a disability are interviewed by a member of the Student Services Team to determine the level of support required. The College can also provide help with the completion of application forms and other relevant documentation

The College will respond to the individual needs of learners and upon request produce information relating to admissions or courses in alternative formats including audio and large print.

The College welcomes learners with disabilities and learning difficulties and will arrange a one-to-one interview, where appropriate, to discuss courses and explore needs on an individual basis. Similarly, the College will provide additional support at admissions and enrolment for learners from other countries, especially where English is not their first language.

The College will endeavour to ensure that arrangements for enrolment do not inadvertently discriminate against any group of potential learners. The College is able to provide information, advice and an off-site enrolment service for both groups of learners and individuals where appropriate.

Our admissions staff will explain options available and guide learners through regulations relating to fees, funding and support available.

The College is aware of the need for confidentiality and will endeavour to ensure that all learners have the opportunity to discuss their individual needs and personal circumstances in private.

e) Applications from current Northern College Learners

All learners should receive information on course about progression routes as part of the College's tutorial programme, supplemented with support from the Student Services Team. Learners may also access additional information at attendance at one of the College open/admissions days.

The College aims to ensure that all learners are helped in the process of making positive and appropriate progression and destination choices. Where learners are unable to progress to the next level of course they will be referred to the Student Services Team for a progression interview.

f) Ensuring learners enrol to an appropriate course

College Admissions procedures, outlined in Admissions Procedure section below, aim to ensure that all learners apply for and are enrolled onto the best course for them, a course where they will succeed.

Where a learner declares a medical condition, disability or criminal history that may prevent them gaining employment in a particular area, the learner will be advised accordingly. This will not necessarily prevent them from completing a course of study, but the College will ensure that they are aware of any employment constraints e.g. regulations relating to employment in the armed services or in the childcare professions.

g) Eligibility for Funding

Admission to Skills Funding Agency funded courses will be restricted to students who meet Skills Funding Agency eligibility rules.

h) Specific Admissions Conditions Relating to Student Behaviour

There are some circumstances in which learners will be offered a place on a course subject to a specific condition relating to their behaviour. This may be in response to previous behavioural issues which fall short of needing a formal disciplinary process but are nevertheless undesirable in a learning environment, for example, persistent lateness, inappropriate consumption of alcohol or inappropriate behaviour towards other students. Such conditions will allow the College to monitor behaviour and take swift action if inappropriate behaviour is exhibited.

i) **Persistent Non-Attendance**

Any learner who without good reason fails to attend a course or courses for which they have a confirmed place may have offers for future courses withdrawn.

j) **Right to refuse admission**

The college reserves the right to refuse admission to applicants in line with the principles outlined in this policy.

4. Monitoring and Review

The implementation of this policy will be reviewed through the Support Standards Committee and the Equality and Diversity Committee.

This policy, procedure and admissions guidelines for staff are reviewed annually

PART B: PROCEDURES

1. Access to Higher Education Diploma

a) Information Stage

All potential applicants will receive information about the course and an application form from the College on request.

Alternatively learners may receive information through attendance at one of the College open/admissions days or community based recruitment events.

b) Application Stage

Applicants should complete an application form and return it to the College. Applications will be acknowledged within **2 weeks** of receipt.

Applicants who have a disability or learning difficulty are strongly encouraged to let the College know so that support can be put in place. In many cases the applicant will be invited to attend a separate 'support interview' to discuss their needs in more detail.

The application will be recorded, logged and forwarded to the Programme Manager or Course Administrator to arrange an interview. The applicant will receive notification of the time scales for interviews/attendance at a Diploma Admissions Day within **4 weeks** of the form arriving in College.

The College will request a reference from the applicant's referees and this information will be forwarded, in confidence, to the interviewer.

After the interview, the applicant will be informed of the outcome within **4 weeks**. Where an offer, firm or conditional, is made the applicant will be provided with clear instructions as to what to do next regarding acceptance and enrolment.

Where an applicant has been interviewed and meets the admissions criteria for a course that is 'full' their name will be placed on a reserve list and a place will be confirmed once it becomes available. Where appropriate the learner will be advised of other suitable courses within the College or with other colleges.

c) Admissions Criteria

Selection to the Northern College Access to Higher Education Diploma programme is by application and interview, and the College makes every effort to interview all suitable candidates. Applicants are invited to attend an admissions day, which includes an information session with the Programme Manager, a literacy task, and a personal interview. Information and guidance sessions with relevant members of Student Services staff are also arranged during the admissions day.

No formal qualifications are required, but the College looks for evidence of commitment to learning, and to being an active citizen. Running a home, bringing up children, past and present working life, involvement in the community, trade union activities and voluntary work, are all learning experiences which the College values highly.

The College also needs to ensure that applicants are in a position to benefit from the course and are capable of achieving the required standard. Often students have undertaken some part-time study before beginning the course.

d) Enrolment Stage

Applicants will be notified of the enrolment arrangements at least **4 weeks** before the start of their course, unless their application is late. In this case enrolment information will be provided at the same time as the offer is made.

e) Post Enrolment/Induction Stage

All learners will participate in an induction programme. All learners will receive written information about general college services, learner rights and responsibilities and support services. All learners are required to undertake initial and diagnostic assessment, normally as part of induction, to determine if they require additional support to help them achieve their qualification.

All learners will be allocated a Personal Tutor. The Personal Tutor and the learners will follow a programme of group and/or individual meetings as developed for their programme.

The College encourages all learners to undertake appropriate English and maths qualifications where a need is identified.

2. Long Level 2 Diploma in Progression

a) Information Stage

All potential applicants will receive information about the course and an application form from the College on request.

Alternatively learners may receive information through attendance at one of the College open/admissions days or community based recruitment events.

b) Application Stage

Applicants should complete an application form and return it to the College. Applications will be acknowledged within **2 weeks** of receipt.

Applicants who have a disability or learning difficulty are strongly encouraged to let the College know so that support can be put in place. In many cases the

applicant will be invited to attend a separate 'support interview' to discuss their needs in more detail.

The application will be recorded, logged and forwarded to the Course Tutor or Course Administrator to arrange an interview. The applicant will receive notification of the time scales for interviews/attendance at an admissions day within **4 weeks** of the form arriving in College.

If considered appropriate the College may ask the applicant to provide a reference. This information will be forwarded, in confidence, to the interviewer.

After the interview, the applicant will be informed of the outcome within **4 weeks**. Where an offer, firm or conditional, is made the applicant will be provided with clear instructions as to what to do next regarding acceptance and enrolment.

Where an applicant has been interviewed and meets the admissions criteria for a course that is 'full' their name will be placed on a reserve list and a place will be confirmed once it becomes available. Where appropriate the learner will be advised of other suitable courses within the College or with other colleges.

c) Admissions Criteria

Selection to the Level 2 Diploma programme is by application and interview, and the College makes every effort to interview all suitable candidates. Applicants are invited to attend an admissions day, which includes an information session with the Course Tutor, a literacy task, a group task, and a personal interview. Information and guidance sessions with relevant members of Student Services staff are also arranged during the admissions day where required.

No formal qualifications are required, but the College looks for evidence of commitment to learning, and to being an active citizen. Running a home, bringing up children, past and present working life, involvement in the community, trade union activities and voluntary work, are all learning experiences which the College values highly.

The College also needs to ensure that applicants are in a position to benefit from the course and are capable of achieving the required standard. Often students have undertaken some part-time study before beginning the course.

d) Enrolment Stage

Applicants will be notified of the enrolment arrangements at least **4 weeks** before the start of their course, unless their application is late. In this case enrolment information will be provided at the same time as the offer is made.

e) Post Enrolment/Induction Stage

All learners will participate in an induction programme. All learners will receive written information about general college services, learner rights and responsibilities and support services. All learners are required to undertake

initial and diagnostic assessment, normally as part of induction, to determine if they require additional support to help them achieve their qualification.

All learners will be allocated a Personal Tutor. The Personal Tutor and the learners will follow a programme of group and/or individual meetings as developed for their programme.

The College encourages all learners to undertake appropriate English and maths qualifications where a need is identified.

3. Cert Ed/PGCE/BA Education and Professional Development in partnership with the University of Huddersfield

a) Information Stage

Potential applicants for the above programme will receive information about the course from the College on request. The information provided will include; details of application dead-lines, and application decision dates, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), a course programme, details about fees/funding and the University of Huddersfield's online application process.

Additional information, advice and guidance will be provided by the Programme Leader or Student Services staff on request.

b) Application Stage

Applicants should complete the University of Huddersfield on-line application form. Response times will meet the University's published standards.

Applicants have the opportunity to request additional learning support via their application and at any other stage of the process. Learners who have a disability or learning difficulty are strongly encouraged to let the College know so that arrangements can be made for an appropriate diagnostic assessment via the University.

Once received, the application will be forwarded to the relevant Programme Leader or Course Administrator to arrange an interview or attendance at a specialist advice session or course open day, whichever is appropriate.

c) Admissions Criteria

Admissions criteria are determined by the University of Huddersfield and are set out in the University's Admissions Handbook. All students must hold a relevant entry qualification (a degree or Level 3 qualification in their subject specialism), provide evidence that they have secured the opportunity to deliver 75 hours of teaching over the period of the course and be able to provide proof of a recent CRB check.

The applicant will be informed at the point of interview of the date by which a decision will be made, and be given clear instructions as to what to do regarding acceptance and enrolment.

d) Enrolment Stage

Applicants will be notified of the enrolment arrangements at least **4 weeks** before the start of their course, unless their application is late. In this case enrolment information will be provided at the same time as the offer is made.

Enrolment takes place at The University of Huddersfield. Learners also complete a non-student registration with Northern College, to hold their presence and contact details on file and to generate a register. All students have to provide original evidence of their entry qualification (degree or Level 3 qualification in their subject specialism) and sign a declaration that they have an up-to-date CRB check, as appropriate.

e) Post Enrolment/Induction Stage

All learners receive an induction to Northern College and the course during their first residential, including comprehensive initial assessment processes and the development of a two-year ILP known as the Personal Development Plan (PDP). These are assessed elements of the qualification.

Learners who have requested additional learning support will undergo a further diagnostic assessment via the University of Huddersfield to establish their needs and levels of support.

The College encourages all learners to undertake appropriate Skills for Life qualifications where a need is identified.

4. Workforce Development Qualifications

a) Information Stage

All potential applicants will receive information about the course and an application form from the College on request.

This comprises a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), Course Programme (for the next and subsequent courses during the academic year) and an application form, and information about any College open/admissions days.

Additional information, advice and guidance will be provided by the Course Tutor or Student Services staff on request.

b) Application Stage

Applicants wishing to apply should complete an application form and return it to the College. Applications will be acknowledged within 2 weeks of receipt.

Applicants who have a disability or learning difficulty are strongly encouraged to let the College know so that support can be put in place. In many cases the applicant will be invited to attend a separate 'support interview' to discuss their needs in more detail.

The application will be recorded, logged and forwarded to the relevant Course Tutor or Course Administrator to arrange an interview or the provision of more detailed information, advice and guidance. The applicant will receive notification of the time scales for an interview or attendance at a specialist advice session within **4 weeks** of receipt of their application. Where a decision is made on the basis of a paper application the decision will be made within **6 weeks** of receipt of the application.

Where admission is via interview the College may request a reference from the applicant's referees and this information will be forwarded, in confidence, to the interviewer.

After the interview, the applicant will be informed of the outcome within four weeks. Where an offer, firm or conditional, is made the applicant will be provided with clear instructions as to what to do next regarding acceptance and enrolment.

Where a learner has applied and meets the admissions criteria for a course that is 'full' their name will be placed on a reserve list and a place will be confirmed once it becomes available. Where appropriate the learner will be advised of other suitable courses within the College or with other providers.

c) Admissions Criteria

Places on the College's Workforce Development programmes will be allocated on the basis of:

- The learner's ability to benefit from the course and evidence of commitment to study taking into account any courses already taken, prior qualification level, guidance given, references from another College, Employer or College Tutor or other relevant evidence
- Any specific entry criteria relating to individual qualifications e.g. progression qualifications or vocational qualifications
- Availability of places
- Availability of childcare and suitable residential accommodation where relevant

Applicants from groups currently underrepresented in the College may be prioritised.

d) Enrolment Stage

Learners will be notified of the enrolment arrangements at least **4 weeks** before the start of their course, unless their application is late. In this case enrolment information will be provided at the same time as the offer is made.

e) Post Enrolment/Induction Stage

All learners will participate in an induction programme. All learners will receive written information about general college services, learner rights and responsibilities and support services.

All learners undertake an initial assessment, normally as part of induction.

The College encourages all learners to undertake appropriate English or maths qualifications where a need is identified.

5. Short Courses – Openly Recruited Programmes

a) Information Stage

All learners wishing to apply for one of the above courses will receive information about the course and an application form from the College on request.

Alternatively learners may receive information through attendance at one of the College open days or community based recruitment events.

b) Application Stage

Learners wishing to apply should complete an application form and return it to College. We strongly encourage learners to explain their reasons for wanting to come on the course on the relevant section of the application form.

Learners who have a disability or learning difficulty are strongly encouraged to let the College know so that support can be put in place. In many cases the applicant will be invited to attend a separate interview or telephone interview to discuss their needs in more detail.

Applications will be acknowledged within **2 weeks** of receipt.

The application will be recorded, logged and forwarded to the relevant Programme Coordinator or Course Administrator.

c) Admissions Criteria

Places on the College's short courses will be allocated on the basis of:

- Whether the learner has an agreed Learning Plan outlining a coherent programme of study leading to a progression qualification (accredited courses only) or other agreed learning goal
- The learner's ability to benefit from the course and evidence of a commitment to learning, taking into account any courses already taken, prior qualification level, guidance given, references from another College, Employer, or College Tutor (current students) or other relevant evidence

- Any specific entry criteria relating to individual qualifications e.g. progression qualifications or vocational qualifications
- Availability of places
- Availability of childcare and suitable residential accommodation where relevant

Applicants from groups currently underrepresented in the College may be prioritised

Learners may be invited to an Information, Advice and Guidance interview prior to an offer being made. The purpose of the interview will be to explore the learner's ability to benefit from the course and to agree an appropriate progression route.

Where a learner has applied and meets the admissions criteria for a course that is 'full' their name will be placed on a reserve list and a place will be confirmed once it becomes available. Where appropriate the learner will be advised of other suitable courses within the College or with other providers.

Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application at least **6 weeks** before the course start date, unless the application is late. For late applications a decision will be made and the applicant informed within **1 week** of the course start date.

d) Enrolment Stage

Instructions for enrolment are included with the course offer letter.

e) Post Enrolment/Induction Stage

All learners will participate in a short course related induction activity at the start of their course. All learners will receive written information about general college services, learner rights and responsibilities and support services.

All learners **attending for the first time** will be invited to a new learner induction session. In addition all new learners are encouraged to undertake an initial assessment to; help them to plan their future learning, establish whether they need to complete an English or maths qualification and to determine if they require additional support to help them to complete their course or achieve a qualification.

All new learners will be entitled to a group or individual tutorial to develop an Individual Learning and Progression Plan.

Returning learners may be encouraged to undertake the new learner induction as a refresher if they have not attended College within the last two years.

6. Work Place Learning Programmes

a) Information Stage

Employees or volunteers wishing to enrol onto a workplace learning programme will receive information from a member of the College's staff, this may be a

College Manager or Course Tutor. Application processes will be agreed with the relevant employer. Once learners have been accepted onto workplace learning programme they will be allocated an occupationally competent assessor or qualified tutor who will liaise with the learner and their employer.

b) Enrolment Stage

Enrolment will normally take place at the first session or at a pre-arranged IAG and enrolment session.

c) Post Enrolment/Induction Stage

All learners will participate in an induction programme. All learners will receive written information about general college services, learner rights and responsibilities and support services. All learners are required to undertake an initial and diagnostic assessment, normally as part of induction, to establish whether they need to complete an English or Maths qualification and also to determine if they require additional support to help them achieve the qualification.

7. Partnership Courses

These are bespoke courses developed in partnership with the College's partners, for example, Trade Unions, Local Authorities and community groups. Admissions processes for these courses will be agreed with the relevant partner organisation and be tailored to the particular organisation and intended learner group. Learners accepted on to such programmes will have the same admissions entitlements as all other learner groups.

8. Applicants with a criminal record

a) Information /Application Stage

There are specific courses for example in the area of Childcare where the possession of a criminal record may preclude a learner from having a career in that area. A potential applicant is advised to mention any reprimands, cautions or convictions at application/interview, if necessary to have a confidential interview with the Student Services Manager before making an application.

The College has a procedure for conducting Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks for specified courses. The action taken as a result of a positive disclosure or information received from the Police/Probation Service is outlined in this procedure. There will be occasions on which the learner will be advised to change their course of study or even to leave the College.

For most courses (except in the areas specified above) a learner is not required to disclose any criminal history. The College application form for full-time courses and part-time courses does not ask the learner if they have a criminal record.

Where a student has a serious criminal conviction, for example for an act of violence or of a sexual nature and the applicant chooses not to disclose then the

College would be unaware of this unless the Police or Probation Service, were to bring this to the attention of the College.

In line with the policy statement, the College aims to provide a service which meets individual needs. In the case of a learner with a serious criminal conviction this means balancing the needs of the learner with the conviction with the safety of the wider community of learners.

b) Applicants with a Serious Criminal Conviction

Where the College is made aware that a learner who has applied for a course at College has a criminal conviction the following steps would be taken:

The College is made aware of the serious conviction which it considers may place its staff, students or visitors to the College at risk.

The College seeks the applicant's consent to obtain such additional information as may be required in order to carry out a risk assessment. This information might come from the Probation Service, Police or other agency with whom the applicant is engaged. The risk assessment will consider such factors as:

- The circumstances of the conviction
- How long ago the conviction happened
- What the applicant has been doing since the conviction e.g. have there been any breaches of a probation order
- The course that they have applied for e.g. whether it involves contact with vulnerable adults or children
- The ability of the College to apply actions identified by the risk assessment

If as a result of that risk assessment the College is satisfied that the applicant's presence in College does not present a significant risk the student may be admitted to College.

In some circumstances the admission may be conditional on the student agreeing to meet standards set out in a student behaviour agreement, or on the student accessing the College on a non-residential basis.

Where the decision to allow the learner to study at the College is dependent upon the risk assessment being put into place, then staff who are involved in this will be provided with all up to date information to allow this to happen.

The conduct of the learner and compliance with protocols determined by the risk assessment will be monitored by the Student Services Manager, who will report to the Vice Principal Residential and Administrative Services, if any problems arise.

Where as a result of the risk assessment it is felt that the applicant should not be permitted to study at the college this will be communicated to the applicant directly, or where appropriate through the relevant agency.

9. Re-admission after Disciplinary Procedures

There are occasions when a student has been dismissed or has been refused admission on disciplinary grounds and now wishes to re-apply to the College. It is recommended that a minimum time period of two years should have elapsed before such an application is considered. After that period the following procedure should be followed:

1) The student should put in writing their request to return to the College and the grounds upon which they believe the original decision is no longer relevant. Where appropriate the student may include testimony or information from an advocate such as a key worker.

2) Applications will be considered by a small panel consisting of one of the Vice Principals and the Student Services Co-ordinator. Other staff members who have knowledge of the applicant may be consulted where appropriate. Factors to be taken into consideration will include:

- The time elapsed since the original decision
- The nature of the disciplinary offence
- Any factors which may have contributed to the disciplinary offence
 - e.g. substance misuse, mental health issues, family circumstances
- Any risk factors which may contribute to a recurrence of the disciplinary offence
- The student's academic progress and current situation
- The suitability of the course(s) applied for (in line with the Admissions Policy)

3) Potential outcomes will be as follows:

- i) The student's application is approved and any ongoing restriction lifted
- ii) The student is invited into the College for an IAG session to determine the best course of action in terms of their academic progress
- iii) The original decision is held to be still relevant and the student is therefore refused admission.

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10. Appeals – All Admissions

| Any individual shall have the right to appeal to the Principal against a decision to refuse admission to them. The Principal's decision shall be final.

Area	Student Policies
Sub Area	Admissions
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Approved By	Policy and Finance
Document Manager	Denise Pozorski
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