

Higher Education Admissions Policy

1. Scope and Purpose of Policy

This policy is to inform applicants, parents, guardians, and Halesowen College staff of the policies and procedures involved in making an application to the College. Halesowen College aims to provide fair and equal access to its higher education courses for all those who have the potential to succeed or benefit from it. The policy will be produced in full on the College website, HE Moodle pages and that relevant sections will be included in the Prospectus, with clear indication of how to find the complete version. Hard copy will be available on request, and details of how to obtain this will also be publicised on the College website and in the Prospectus.

The College welcomes applications from students with appropriate qualifications and/or experiences. We consider applicants to our courses solely on the basis of their merit, ability and potential. We welcome applicants who hold alternative qualifications/experience different to those traditionally offered who can demonstrate the ability to benefit from the course and show their potential to complete the course successfully. Although recent preparatory study at an appropriate level (e.g. an Access course) is recommended, students may be considered on the basis of prior evidenced professional/work experience and/or other assessment procedures, and the assessment of personal suitability. Higher Education Admissions staff will be able to offer information, advice and guidance on this process.

Halesowen College will consider all information contained within the application form, or produced at interview or audition. This might include past academic performance, predicted grades, personal statements, academic and personal references and any other evidence of skills, aptitude and potential to succeed. Relevant experience (particularly for professional courses where this may be required) is valued.

2. Basis of Admission

- i. The admission of students is based on the reasonable expectation that the applicant will be able to fulfil the objectives and achieve the standard required for the award for which they are registered.
- ii. Entry requirements should be explicit in identifying the knowledge, skills and competences required at admission and relating these to content, mode of delivery and outcomes of the award.
- iii. Selection criteria should set out the standards and means by which an applicant will be judged.
- iv. The College is committed to widening access to and participation in higher education (HE) by raising awareness and expectations in the pre-HE community in order to increase the pool of candidates who can benefit from the provision on offer.

- v. No student will be subjected to less favourable treatment on grounds of race, ethnic or national origins, colour, gender, sexuality, parental status, marital status, disability status, creed, political belief or social or economic background.
- vi. Support for disabled students can be provided through the Admissions officer with responsibility for student support who works from the Admissions Team.
- vii. The College recognises the importance of the provision of accurate and appropriate pre-entry information and support to prospective students in order to ensure that all applicants will be given every opportunity to choose courses in an informed manner and to be admitted to a suitable course.
- viii. Constant monitoring and review of admissions practices and procedures is necessary to effect improvements as required and to respond to any changes in the institutional mission and external factors including changing patterns in the applicant market.

3. Responsibilities

- a. Responsibility for the HE Admissions Policy and procedures lies with the College Leadership Team, and is operationalised by the Admissions Office and Registry Services. Academic decisions are made by Course Leaders in collaboration with, and supported by, the Admissions Team.
- b. Training for all involved in Admissions matters will be available through the College Staff Development scheme and staff Development opportunities with Partner HEI's, if required.
- c. College faculties that are delivering qualifications through registering with awarding bodies are responsible for setting the entry criteria for their courses and for communicating these to the Admissions Office in a timely fashion. Those faculties working in partnership with HEI's have entry criteria set by the HEI. Decisions on applications are made by Course Leaders.

For all courses, the selection process will take into account:

- The applicant's potential to succeed in his or her chosen course
- or expected academic or professional qualifications and grades
- Relevant work or other experience
- Applicants' own statements of interest in the course
- Reference(s)
- Where appropriate, an interview or portfolio of the applicants' work
- Skills derived from non-academic extra-curricular activities such as engagement in sport, the arts or voluntary and community work
- Contextual consideration of merit and potential.

Admissions are responsible for:

- Acting as first point of contact for all course enquiries, applications and enrolments.
- Providing a personalised initial information, advice and guidance (IAG) service to all applicants from initial enquiry through to enrolment.
- Acknowledging receipt of all applications and arranging interviews and assessments as appropriate.
- Notifying Learning Support when an applicant declares a special learning need and/or disability and liaising with them regarding the provision of support and reasonable adjustments to the application process.
- Notifying applicants of the outcome of all interviews and sending offers, as specified by the Course Leader or discussing alternative courses as appropriate.
- Ensuring all offer letters comply with CMA guidance by containing the full set of information required to allow applicants to make an informed decision regarding acceptance of the offer made to them.

Student Services are responsible for:

- Providing appropriate IAG to prospective students, including enquirers and applicants, seeking information about financial support.
- Assisting prospective students in making funding applications to Student Finance England or other relevant agencies.

Learning Support are responsible for:

- Contacting applicants by telephone to discuss their declaration of a specific learning need or disability on the application form.
- Working with curriculum teams on request to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to interviewing conditions in order to accommodate those who have declared a learning difficulty or disability.
- Ensuring that the College explores reasonable adjustments to accommodate additional needs thus enabling the student to access the curriculum and, where this is not possible, to liaise with the curriculum team so that they can contact the applicant with the outcome.

The Marketing Team is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the College is meeting its obligations under Consumer Protection Law and is compliant with the guidance publicised by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).
- Quality checking and publication of pre-application course and institutional promotion material.

4. Transparency

The College in conjunction with HEI partners is committed to providing accurate and clear communication of information that will support students to make an informed decision about their course. The College requires the University Centre Manager in conjunction with the Marketing Team to publish guideline entry requirements for all undergraduate programmes in all relevant communications, for example, HE Prospectus, UCAS Publications, College Website and HEI Websites.

Information on the entry qualifications of applicants is accepted in previous years and other statistical data may be found on the Website www.unistats.com

5. Consistency

In order to ensure consistency and fairness, the principles and procedures set out in this policy are followed for all programmes. The College acknowledges that admissions processes will vary to some extent across subject areas depending on the nature of the programme.

6. Entry Profiles

The College will make available Admissions Profiles for all its academic courses through its website and HE prospectus. All admissions decisions will be made against the criteria detailed in the admissions profile. Each profile will specify:

- typical academic entry requirements
- other accepted experience and/or qualities.

The college aims to make higher education accessible and welcomes applications from all those interested in higher education. In addition to traditional academic qualifications the College recognises prior learning of applicants, either as a basis for entry to a course or to exempt applicants from some of the requirements which shall be clarified in Appendix 1.

7. Minimum entry Requirements

Appendix 1 shows the minimum entry requirements for Level 4 courses, including requirements for 'mature' students.

8. Decision Making

Full time applicants will apply through UCAS and part time applicants through College 'Apply' system.

a. The Application Process

1. The Admissions Officer with responsibility for Higher Education will:
 - check that all necessary information has been included. Where further information such as a transcript, reference or personal statement is required, a written request will be made to the applicant.
 - check the applicant's fee status and take appropriate action
 - liaise with relevant Course Leaders who may interview the applicant as part of the selection process.
 - The Course Leader will return the application to the Admissions Officer who will process applications, normally within ten working days
 - The Admissions Office will then issue a formal offer letter by mail to the applicant. This letter will detail any outstanding conditions and further instruction where appropriate.
2. Those applicants not meeting the selection criteria of their chosen course may be considered for, and offered, an alternative course. If an application is

unsuccessful the reason for rejection is recorded to provide applicants with feedback if requested.

3. Significant changes to advertised programmes (between an offer being made and registration) must be conveyed to applicants as a matter of priority. Where the College decides to terminate a programme the applicant will be notified in writing.
4. Applicants will be expected to know the obligations placed on them if they accept an offer of a place at the College, or on a collaborative programme with a HEI. This information is made available at the time an offer of a place is made.
5. All successful applicants will be sent information on arrangements for enrolment, registration and induction of new students.

9. Feedback Policy

In order to support transparent admissions systems, the College acknowledges an applicant's need to know why their application was deemed unsuccessful feedback will only be given in written format (not over the telephone or in person) within 8 weeks of receipt of the request. The Admissions Office will not consider an application that has been re-submitted in the same cycle in light of the feedback provided for the same course, but the application may be considered for an alternative course.

In line with Data Protection policies the College will not be able to provide feedback to anyone other than the applicant unless the Admissions Office has been advised to do so. The feedback will be sent to the address the applicant has provided on their application form. Therefore, applicants should be sure to inform the Admissions Office of any changes.

Halesowen College does not allow appeals against an admissions decision, and the Complaints Procedure should be followed, if an applicant is unhappy with the feedback received.

10. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Courses requiring a DBS check will have this clearly stated in their Halesowen College HE prospectus entry and Entry Profiles. Some examples of courses requiring DBS include:

Foundation Degree in Early Years
Foundation Degree in Learning Support
HND in Sport Studies

Successful applicants to Initial Teacher Education will be required to undergo police record checks, carried out by the DBS, before being allowed to enrol successful applicants to all the above courses. Other courses may also require one or more of these checks, and this should be indicated in all pre-application publicity.

11. Fees and Finance

Up to date information regarding course fees, registration fees and any additional course related fees will be available from the admissions office.

12. Disability and Dyslexia Support

Applications to Halesowen College HE courses will be assessed purely on academic grounds. A disabled applicant's merits are assessed as they would be if any reasonable adjustments had been made. In some instances, a course leader may need to seek additional information from the student and/or liaise with Student Services for the purposes of establishing if adjustments might be appropriate to support a student.

The Admissions Office will provide Student Services with copies of application forms for all successful applicants and will send such applicants information provided by Student Services.

Student Services will, guided by the Equality Act (2010), inform the applicant of the reasonable adjustments the College can make in relation to their disability. Based on this information, it will be the applicant's decision as to whether or not they wish to accept the offer of a place on a course. In the unlikely event that the College is unable to make a reasonable adjustment, the SEND Co-ordinator (or representative) will inform the applicant as soon as possible.

13. Monitoring and Evaluation

Policy is informed by the monitoring and evaluation of all admissions-related processes as follows:

- regular review of admissions processes, including consultation to review performance and efficiency
- annual review of entry profiles and decision making criteria, including new qualifications, plus ad hoc revisions where necessary
- annual review of application data to inform policy development.

This policy statement will be reviewed and updated annually.

Reviewed / Approved	By	Date
Reviewed by	Joanne Williams	June 2024
Consulted with	Craig Tucker	June 2024
Approved	-	
CLT approved	-	
Website	Yes	
Next Review date		01.07.2025

Minimum entry requirements for HNC/HND courses

Already have or be willing to work towards achieving Grade C or above in GCSE English and Maths

A Levels or equivalent Level 3 qualifications

Minimum entry requirements for Degree courses with Partner HEI's

4 GCSEs (Grade C or above) plus 120 Tariff points from minimum of 2 and maximum of 3½
A Levels or equivalent Level 3 qualifications

Acceptable Qualifications (alone or in combination, to satisfy the Tariff requirements): *(For notes on these qualifications, please consult the current prospectus)*

GCE A Levels and AS Levels

BTEC Nationals

OCR Nationals

Access to Higher Education Diploma

Progression and Advanced Diploma

AQA Baccalaureate

Other qualifications within the UCAS Tariff

Professional Qualifications

NVQ Level 3/Advanced Apprenticeship

Scottish Highers and Advanced Highers

Irish Leaving Certificate

International Baccalaureate and European Baccalaureate

International Qualifications

Other qualifications and Mature Students

We welcome applicants who hold alternative qualifications/experience different to those shown in this section who can demonstrate the ability to benefit from the course and show their potential to complete the course successfully. Although recent preparatory study at an appropriate level (e.g. an Access to Higher Education Diploma) is recommended, students may be considered on the basis of prior evidenced professional/work experience and/or other assessment procedures, and the assessment of personal suitability. HE Admissions office staff will be able to offer information, advice and guidance on this process. Exploratory Essay routes should only be offered to applicants who can show evidence of recent study, and such applicants must be interviewed as part of the entry process.

Accreditation of Prior Learning

Students with relevant previous study at level 4/5 or extensive experience may be considered eligible for Accreditation of Prior Learning if they can provide sufficient evidence to show that the unit learning outcomes have already been achieved by the student.