

## **6. FULL-TIME FURTHER EDUCATION** **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

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## **Admissions Policy for Further Education for 2019/20 Academic Year**

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### **1. Overview**

The aim of this policy is to provide a comprehensive, transparent and customer-focussed approach for applications to Colchester Institute, from initial application to admission as a student.

Colchester Institute is a college of further and higher education which welcomes applications for its full and part-time courses from all sections of the community. Further education relates to courses that are below the level of a university degree for people who are older than compulsory school age

This policy covers full-time prospective Further Education (FE) students from the UK and EEA. Separate arrangements apply for applications to some entry level courses, apprenticeships, part time and full cost programmes and to Higher Education.

The College is committed to ensuring that every student is on the most appropriate course relevant to their academic ability and aspirations for their future. All offers of places are made subject to the specific entry requirements, adherence to College policies and there being sufficient demand for the course offered. The College may withdraw an offer if an applicant submits false or misleading information that is instrumental in securing an offer of a place.

College staff will follow the admissions process to ensure consistent and high standards of customer care. The College admissions policy is subject to annual review as part of the College's quality improvement and self-assessment cycle.

## **2. Use of Applicant Data and Data Protection**

On completion of the Colchester Institute on-line application form, applicant data will be imported into the College management information system, with information added to it by staff during the admissions process.

All information gathered on the application form, and collected through the application process, will be retained and processed in line with the Colchester Institute [Privacy Notice](#) for relevant purposes connected with the application in accordance with data protection legislation.

Colchester Institute may be required to share data and information about all applications with Local Authorities, the Department for Education, the Department for Business Innovation and Skills, or current schools/providers/colleges where necessary.

By submitting an application form all applicants are confirming the following terms:

- I agree to abide by Colchester Institute expectations, policies and procedures.
- Where relevant, I authorise my current school/provider/college to provide Colchester Institute with relevant information to support my application, including my predicted grades.
- Following my enrolment (where relevant), I authorise my current school/provider/college to release information to Colchester Institute where this is needed to ensure my support needs are met and/or where this information is needed for my safety and wellbeing at Colchester Institute.
- If I am aged 18 years or under on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019 I provide consent for Colchester Institute to liaise with my named next of kin where relevant to my application.

## **3. Publicity and Information**

The College will outline its FE course provision within the annual mini guide prospectus, published in September every year, with further information on the Colchester Institute website. The publicity will provide the minimum entry requirements for each course and applicants will be considered on the basis of their ability to meet those criteria plus any specified additional elements.

School careers co-ordinators, guidance advisers and other Information Advice and Guidance professionals, will be invited into the College for an annual briefing every September, which provides information on the range of courses available, updates and changes to the curriculum offer, and the admissions process.

Prospective students and their parents have the opportunity to visit the College at a number of published Open Events during the academic year to consult with staff and receive information on courses, and are strongly encouraged to do so. Progression opportunities will be publicised to existing students via tutorials and progression events.

Colchester Institute will take reasonable steps to provide the programmes of study listed in publications but may have to modify or withdraw a particular course depending on customer demand and other factors. The College will take reasonable steps to cause as little disruption to applicants as possible, but cannot be held responsible for any subsequent loss.

#### **4. Applying**

Applications will be accepted from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 online through the links at the Colchester Institute website. Where possible all applications will be received through the website, although potential students who are unable to access the website area will be able to request a hard copy application form.

Applicants submitting an application received by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019 will be guaranteed a place on their chosen programme subject to them satisfying the published entry requirements, and where the College continues to run the programme. Applications will be accepted after this date, but there will be no guarantee of a place on the chosen programme.

Late applications received after Friday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2019 will not be processed, instead applicants will be asked to attend one of the Advice days in August to discuss their programme choice with a member of the teaching staff.

#### **5. Applications to Apprenticeship Programmes**

Applicants are able to make an application either just for an apprenticeship, or to be considered initially for both an apprenticeship and a full time Further Education Programme.

To be considered for an apprenticeship the applicant must have an employer, and the employer will be contacted by the College to establish their suitability, and that of the applicant, before taking this further to an apprenticeship sign up. In these instances an applicant's full time Further Education Programme choice will be prioritised until such time as the apprenticeship is fully confirmed.

#### **6. Application and Interview Process**

Once their application has been received and processed, applicants will be invited to the next available admissions interview event for their subject to discuss the details of the programme of study, the applicant's interest in this area and the relevant entry requirements. Depending on the chosen area of study, this can take place within a group presentation session, or it could be on an individual one to one basis.

Following the interview event, Admissions Tutors will consider each applicant fairly and decisions whether or not to make an offer will be made based on the full profile of an applicant, including the predicted/achieved GCSE grades. Admissions tutors will be required to demonstrate that decisions have been based on criteria equally applied to all.

The majority of programmes will require applicants to have obtained, or to be predicted to achieve, specified entry requirements including certain GCSE grades. Some programmes are also subject to other conditions, including obtaining a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service Check (DBS). For applicants applying for Art and Design, Music and Performing Arts the interview will also include a portfolio review or audition. All entry criteria will be published on the website and within the published Mini Guide.

If an applicant does not attend their interview event, or portfolio review / audition, they will automatically be invited in to the next available date. Failure to attend two arranged appointments, without prior notification or request to rearrange, will result in the application being withdrawn from the process. Applicants will be written to and if they wish to have their application reinstated they will have to request this in writing, after which they will only have one more opportunity to attend an interview event before being finally withdrawn.

## **7. Confirming Predicted and Achieved GCSE grades**

Applicants are asked to provide their predicted or actual GCSE grades at application, and their application will be processed using this information. Where applicants are currently at school, or another education provider, the College will liaise with that school/provider to confirm predicted and achieved grades, information on their progress and to request any other information that the College may need to know to inform the decision making process. Where information is provided that raises a cause for concern about the applicant's suitability, the College reserves the right to review the application, and any offer made, and if required to refer to an Admissions Review Panel.

Applicants who have had a non-traditional school education will be considered on an individual basis. Please note that specific GCSE qualifications and grades will be required for certain courses.

## **8. Applicants with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

Colchester Institute welcomes applications from people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Where an applicant identifies on their application that they have Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities, their application will be referred to the Additional Learning Support Team so that further enquiries can be made with the applicant, and parents/carers where required, about their needs and how these can be supported, during the admissions process and on programme. If the applicant is still at school then this information will be discussed with the school to ensure any relevant SEND assessments and information are shared.

For students with SEND who are offered a place on programme, all SEND information (including an Education Health and Care Plan) will be shared with the curriculum leaders for their subject area, and with Additional Learning Support staff to ensure appropriate provisions are in place and that reasonable adjustments can be made to their programme of study.

## 8.1 Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

Colchester Institute should be consulted in advance by the Local Authority if the intention is to name the College in an applicant's EHCP; any applicant whose EHCP does not name Colchester Institute should contact their local authority and school to discuss the matter as soon as possible. In certain circumstances, Colchester Institute may use the consultation process to object to being named in an EHCP. This might happen if there are very significant concerns that the college may be incompatible with that particular learner's needs, or that by enrolling them, the education of other students would be adversely affected.

Applicants with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which names Colchester Institute will have their annual EHCP reviews (after enrolment) co-ordinated by Colchester Institute on behalf of the local authority.

EHCP annual reviews will be scheduled to take place at times and dates that are convenient for students and their families and in line with the 0 – 25 SEND Code of Practice. It may be necessary for the college to share information and work with other professionals such as social workers or healthcare practitioners during the EHCP annual review process. Applicants and their parents/carers should visit <http://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/> for the latest information on their rights and responsibilities relating to the EHCP process.

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## 9. Offers

Following the interview event and / or audition / portfolio review, applicants will receive a decision within 2 weeks. This will usually be:

- A conditional offer subject to academic and/or non-academic requirements, including information received from their current education provider.
- An unconditional offer subject to original certificates being provided as evidence for applicants who have previously obtained the entry requirements.

Where an applicant is unlikely to meet the entry criteria for their chosen programme of study this should be discussed at their interview event, and wherever possible the applicant should be given the opportunity to discuss other options and meet with another programme area. Careers Guidance staff are available at all interview events to talk to applicants and provide impartial Information, Advice and Guidance on their options.

If, following the interview event, no suitable offer of a place can be made the application will be referred to the Area Head of the chosen subject area to be reviewed, or to be referred to another suitable programme area.

Where there are doubts or concerns about an applicant's suitability the case may be referred to an Admissions Review Panel

## **10. Fee Assessments**

If an applicant declares a non-EEA nationality on their application, or that their normal country of residence is outside the UK, or that they have not been living in the EEA for the last 3 years they will be asked to complete a Fee Assessment. The Fees Assessment will determine the fees a student should pay.

## **11. Course Closure**

The College reserves the right to withdraw a course at its discretion, including for example, where a course is under-subscribed or there is a significant change to how a course is funded. In such cases, applicants will be offered advice on the availability of alternative courses, which may include an alternative campus. However, the offer of a place cannot be guaranteed.

## **12. Admissions Review Panels**

The Admissions Review Panel makes decisions regarding admission of students in cases of a complex nature and where coordination of admission and support processes are required.

The Admissions Review Panel will also hear cases of a complex nature where students have been admitted and are on-course and where decisions are required relating to continuation or progression which cannot be dealt with by any other committee.

An Admissions Review Panel could be convened for a number of reasons, see below for a non-exhaustive list:

- Concerns raised through the application process, either through information provided from other education providers, previous programme areas within the College or behaviours exhibited through the interview events or Welcome and Induction days.
- Disclosure of Criminal Convictions through application, enrolment or on programme, including on the return of a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check
- Identified Safeguarding concerns
- An individual's fitness to study through health or mental health grounds

### 12.1. Operation and Reporting

The Panel operates to:

- A) ensure a supportive and fair admissions process for applicants;
- B) provide assistance and support to admissions staff in carrying out their duties; and
- C) provide guidance on current issues that may impact on an admissions decision, or on the continuation of a current student

An Admissions Review Panel is required to explore all relevant issues and obtain information from all appropriate sources pertaining to each case to reach a collective agreement on whether a student is accepted onto, or retained at, a course at Colchester Institute.

The Admissions Review Panel operates in respect of both further and higher education. In the case of higher education reference may also be made to UCAS, the relevant awarding organisation and external contract procedures.

The Admissions Review Panel meets on an ad hoc basis and a request to initiate a meeting may be made by a member of staff to the Vice Principal: Student Services and Support. Notes of the meeting will be kept and the Admissions Review Panel decision will be communicated to the Applicant / Student in writing.

### 12.2. Appeals

A student may appeal against the outcome of the Admission Review Panel to the Vice Principal: Curriculum Delivery and Performance in writing within 10 working days of receiving written notification of the ARP decision. The letter must outline the grounds of the appeal. The appeal will normally be heard within 10 working days of receipt of the written appeal.

### 12.3. Membership

The Admissions Review Panel shall comprise:

Vice Principal: Student Services and Support  
Area Head from relevant subject area  
Student Services Manager  
Additional Learning Support and SEND Manager, where appropriate

Additional members will be co-opted where required.

### **13. Exceptions to the Normal Admissions Process**

Colchester Institute reserves the right to refuse admission to an applicant at the Principal's discretion. This could be for a number of reasons, examples would include an applicant who has previously been refused admission or excluded from this or any other educational institution, or where there is reason to believe that the admission of an individual could present a risk to him or herself, other students, staff or other college visitors.

In these cases the Principal's decision is final and there is no right to appeal.

Whilst Colchester Institute is committed to widening participation and to providing opportunities to all students who will benefit from its programmes and services, it must be noted that Further Education Colleges are under no statutory obligations to admit any individual student or to provide any specific programme of study. Ultimately decisions regarding the admission of individual students and the provision, or continuation, of specific programmes rests with College leadership.

### **14. Associated Policies**

Equality & Diversity Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Criminal Conviction Disclosure Policy

Additional Learning Support Policy