

Admissions Policy (Further Education & Apprenticeships)

Review

Formal Review Cycle	Every 3 years		
Latest Formal Review (date)	June 2026	Next Formal Review Due (date)	June 2029
Policy Owner	Emma Cottle, Vice Principal: Marketing, Strategy and Communications		
Policy Author	Stephen Welsh, Head of CRM, Insight and Reporting		

Approvals

Board of Corp Y/N	Y	Committee	CQSE	Date Board approved	
ELT Y/N	Y	ELT date approved		Additional committee	

Publication

Website Y/N	Y	Intranet Y/N	Y	Student VLE Y/N	Y	Other	
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Change History

Version	Date Reviewed/ Revised	Description of Change	Reviewed by	Approved by
V4	June 2026			
V3	May 2026	Further review and amends	ELT	N/A

V2	April 2026	Review and amends	Emma Cottle/Stephen Welsh	N/A
V1	2022	New Policy	Gilly Gosling-Bell	ELT

Admissions Policy

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. This policy is of the City of Sunderland College, trading as Education Partnership North East (which includes Sunderland College, Hartlepool Sixth Form College and Northumberland College). These colleges will be referred to as “the College” throughout this document.
- 1.2. The College welcomes applications from all prospective students with the motivation to learn and the potential to succeed. The College is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all individuals seeking a place on a programme.
- 1.3. The policy outlines the process to be followed to ensure:
 - All applications are managed on an individual basis and are considered fairly.
 - All potential students will be enrolled onto a programme following the principle of ‘Right Student, Right Course’.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This admissions policy provides the framework for admissions practice for all further education programmes and apprenticeships.
- 2.2. The scope of this policy includes admissions for full-time and part-time further education programmes and apprenticeships offered by the College.
- 2.3. Higher Education admissions is subject to a separate [admissions policy](#).

3. Aims of the Policy/Underpinning Principles

- 3.1. The College is committed to demonstrating fair, transparent and consistent practice in recruitment, selection and enrolment of students to all programmes offered by the College.

- 3.2. The admissions process extends from pre-application stage up to and including enrolment and is crucial to establishing a positive relationship between applicants and the College.
- 3.3. The College is committed, where possible, to meeting the needs of all potential students wishing to undertake study at the College. This commitment is a key focus of the College's Vision and Values.
- 3.4. The College welcomes applications from all prospective students with the motivation to learn and the potential to succeed regardless of age, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, pregnancy, marital or civil partnership status, disability, sexual orientation or social background. The College is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all individuals seeking a place on a programme and is committed to providing a fair and transparent admissions procedure.
- 3.5. The College retains its right to determine the suitability of applicants for enrolment onto a programme, providing this is based on relevant prior qualifications, skills, knowledge and behaviours. It will not infringe on protected characteristics, or personal choice. These criteria will be applied consistently across the College through published admissions requirements, standardised decision-making processes and appropriate staff training.
- 3.6. Funding arrangements may impact on the ability of an applicant to access a particular programme. In such cases, the College will explore all appropriate and legitimate options, to support access to suitable provision. Where an applicant meets the academic requirements for a programme but funding constraints apply, these factors will be considered to ensure that decisions are fair, transparent, and in the best interests of the student.
- 3.7.
- The College will:
- Ensure information relating to entry criteria and programme content is up-to-date, accurate and accessible to applicants and College staff.
 - Ensure expectations for attendance are well documented.
 - Adopt reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system processes.
 - Safeguard applicants interests by only enrolling students who have a potential to complete the programme of study.
 - Ensure applicants are supported through the admissions process.
 - Ensure fair and transparent procedures for complaints and appeals, which are accessible to all students
 - Comply with appropriate legislation and College policies.
- 3.8. All applicants will be enrolled onto a programme following the principle of "Right student, Right course", using the following criteria:

Further Education Programmes

- The applicant satisfies all pre-programme requirements, where relevant, including, completing all documentation, attending appointments and responding to information requests.

- The applicant meets, or is likely to meet, the specific entry requirements of a programme.
- The applicant meets all other admission criteria.
- The applicant attends an interview, where required by a specific programme.
- Where applicable, the applicant agrees to pay any fees required (admission to the College is conditional upon payment, or agreed arrangements for the payment, of any fees due date). This is agreed at the point of enrolment.
- There are places available on the programme of study.
- The applicant can meet the full commitment of a study programme, including the continuation of studying English and Mathematics for those who have not achieved 4 or above at GCSE.

Apprenticeships

- Applicants for apprenticeships must satisfy the entry requirements for the relevant apprenticeship standard. In addition, the applicant will need to satisfy the requirements of the employer, as the decision to employ the applicant rests with the employer.

3.9. The College reserves the right acting reasonably, proportionately and in accordance with its legal obligations to decline to offer a place to any applicant where they determine this is necessary or appropriate. For example, this could include circumstances where they have withheld or provided false or misleading information, or where their behaviour indicates they could be a risk to other members of the College community. Where the college exercises this discretion, it will notify the applicant in writing and the applicant may request feedback.

4.0. Relevant criminal convictions

4.1.0 In accordance with our principles, the College provides a fair and transparent decision-making process for all applications, including applicants declaring a criminal conviction. Applications from those with a previous criminal conviction are subjected to the standard admissions procedures.

4.1.2 If the College is considering making an offer, additional steps are taken to liaise with the applicant and establish the nature of the offence and any other action if required.

4.1.3 For some programmes, a disclosure is required by law, particularly for programmes in health, social work, teaching or working with children. The College will follow the procedures outlined by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of the application. The decision to make an offer lies with the relevant department, in some cases before a DBS has been provided. In cases where an offer has been made, and a DBS indicates an unsuitability for the programme of study, the College reserves the right to withdraw the offer (as detailed in section 9 below). It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure they inform the College of any criminal conviction.

4.1.4 If it is discovered during the application process or following commencement of the programme, that an applicant has a relevant criminal conviction that is not spent, or is never eligible to become spent, the College may deduce that the applicant has knowingly withheld information and the College reserves the right to withdraw the offer (as detailed in section 9 below) or place on the course.

4.1.5 It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the information provided is accurate, and to respond in a timely manner to College requests for additional information in support of their application. If an applicant

does not respond to college requests within a timely manner, the College will assume that they do not wish to progress any further and may withdraw the application (as detailed in section 9 below).

5. Recruitment Process

Further Education Programmes

- 5.1. The College offers a range of full-time and part-time programmes. All up to date programme information can be found on the college website.
- 5.2. Prospective applicants are encouraged to attend on campus open events which take place between October and June each year.
- 5.3. Prospective applicants can apply online for a programme via the College website, at Open Events or via school engagements.
- 5.4. The process for applicants and issuing offers at the College is centralised by the admissions team, in accordance with this Admissions policy.

Apprenticeships

- 5.5. Apprenticeship opportunities are advertised on either the College website, Employer's website or via the National Apprenticeship Service.
- 5.6. The College may hold recruitment events to support the employer. The employer may also organise recruitment events on their own premises.

6. Selection

The College welcomes applications from all individuals with the motivation to learn and the potential to succeed.

Further Education Programmes

- 6.1. Entry requirements for each programme are set out online through the college website. Alternative formats can be made available, wherever possible. The college requirements will be published on the course pages on the college website and applicants are advised to check College programme pages for the most up-to-date information. Applicants may be required to provide documentation which verifies the level and grade of qualifications achieved.
- 6.2. Where a programme does not run, or where there are significant changes made, following an offer and prior to the student commencing the programme, the applicant will be contacted by the college to advise on alternative programmes available, where possible.

Apprenticeships

6.3. The College may be called upon by the employer, in the case of apprenticeships, to sift applicants and assist with the selection process. The decision to employ the applicant rests with the employer.

7. Interview

Further Education Programmes

7.1. In general, the College does not require applicants to be interviewed. However in specific circumstances if an interview is required applicants will receive an interview request via email, the interview or audition would assess suitability, safeguarding or professional competence.

7.2. Interviews will be conducted by a member of the Curriculum team.

7.3. Interview outcomes are recorded by the curriculum team and the Admissions Team.

7.4 The College is committed to providing appropriate feedback to an applicant upon written request only. The request for feedback must be received to admissions@educationpartnershipne.ac.uk within 28 days of the College's decision. Feedback will usually be provided via email direct to the applicant within 14 days of request.

Apprenticeships

7.4. New post apprentices are interviewed by the employer and may be required to attend an Assessment Centre as part of the selection process.

7.5. Apprentices who are already employed, who wish to acquire new knowledge, skills and behaviours will require support from their employer to apply for an apprenticeship and will need to meet the entry requirement of the apprenticeship.

8. Disability and serious health conditions (including SEND as defined by the Equality Act 2010)

8.1 The College welcomes applications from applicants with disabilities, including Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and complies with relevant legislation regarding disability. Applicants will be subject to standard academic selection procedures. Applicants who hold an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) may be invited to attend a consultation. In some cases, applicants may also be asked to attend an information-gathering meeting to enable the College to assess its ability to provide appropriate support. This process helps identify any reasonable adjustments required and ensures that suitable provision is in place to support successful completion of the programme.

8.2 Early disclosure of any disability is strongly encouraged, as it enables the College to better understand and support individual needs. It is the responsibility of the applicant to inform the College of any disability. Applicants must also notify the admissions team of any changes to their personal circumstances during the application process, including the development of any injury or disability that may affect their ability to undertake the programme

8.3 In exceptional cases if the College is unable to appropriately support a learner with specific learning difficulties, disabilities or a serious health condition, a designated member of staff from the Additional Learning Support Team will discuss the outcome with the applicant and parent/carer.

8.4. The College requires applicants who have indicated a recent recurring or serious health problem to provide evidence from a medical professional. These reports do not form part of the selection process and will only be made available to Inclusive Practice Team and relevant curriculum staff. This will ensure reasonable adjustments can be made to support the learner.

9. Withdrawing an offer

9.1 An individual who has been offered a place to study at the College, but who has not yet commenced their programme of study, is not enrolled and is classified by the College as an accepted applicant.

9.2 The College may withdraw an offer made to an accepted applicant, if any one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- Information provided during the application process is found to be false, misleading, incomplete or fraudulent;
- The College becomes aware of conduct or behaviour (whether taking place before or after the offer was made), that the College considers is incompatible with the individual's enrolment at the College;
- Admitting or enrolling the applicant would breach legal, statutory or regulatory requirements;
- The College is unable to deliver the programme as advertised due to circumstances beyond its control;
- The applicant fails to comply with the responsibilities set out in paragraph 11.7;
- The circumstances detailed in section 4 are met

9.3 Where an offer is withdrawn from an accepted applicant, the College will notify the accepted applicant in writing of the reason(s) for the withdrawal and may offer admission to an alternative programme, if appropriate. The College will not be liable for any loss or inconvenience arising from a decision to withdraw an offer made to an accepted applicant.

10. Complaints

10.1. Each applicant is processed in a fair and transparent way. If an applicant believes that, in the processing of their application, the actions of the college have fallen below the standard expected then an applicant may make a complaint.

10.2A complaint can be shared in writing to the Associate Principal of Quality Teaching, Learning and Assessment via Quality@educationpartnershipne.ac.uk who will acknowledge the complaint, investigate and respond on behalf of the College. Under normal circumstances, applicants should expect to have a response within 14 working days of receipt of the letter.

11. Responsibilities

11.1. *The College Governors are responsible for:*

- Understanding and ensuring effective compliance of the College FE Admissions Policy.

11.2. *The College Executive Leadership Team are responsible for:*

- Approval of the College FE Admissions policy.
- Overseeing the effective implementation of the Admissions Policy.

11.3. *College Admissions team (and Apprenticeships team in respect to Apprenticeship applications) are responsible for:*

- Ensuring the effective implementation of the admissions process.
- Monitoring applications, offers and acceptances throughout the admissions cycle.
- Monitoring admissions processes and liaising with Faculty Directors when elements within the process do not meet agreed timescales or quality standards.
- Oversight of admissions communications and interactions, including enrolment.
- Addressing and responding to an enquiry regarding admission of a student in a timely manner.
- Ensuring that accurate information is available to prospective applicants about their programme, the admissions procedure, and processes.
- Arranging college interviews (where this is a requirement) and relevant correspondence as part of the admissions procedure.
- Making accurate offers to all standard applications in line with published entry requirements
- Informing applicants of any obligations placed on them at the time the offer is being made. Once an applicant has accepted a place, providing applicants with information about the arrangements for enrolment and any other information related to their application.

11.4 *Curriculum Managers are responsible for:*

- Adhering to the Admissions Policy
- Ensure that teaching staff make consistent admissions offers in line with the policy, where appropriate.
- Ensure all records are updated following applicants' attendance at an interview, if applicable.

- Monitor student numbers on programmes offered and make timely decisions on withdrawal of programmes due to low numbers.
- Ensure when courses are withdrawn that alternative programmes are offered to effected applicants, if applicable.
- Ensure teaching staff are allocated to support enrolment sessions and applicant events.

11.5. Operations Managers (Apprenticeships) are responsible for:

- Ensure that the delivery teams adhere to the apprenticeship admissions process.
- Ensure the Business Development team and employers are aware of the entry requirements for the relevant apprenticeship standard.
- Ensure that the delivery teams are available to assist the Business Development team and employers to offer advice and support in the apprenticeship admissions process where appropriate.

11.6. Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring programme content and structures are regularly updated in response to regional, national and international academic and career related benchmarks.
- Ensuring programme information and course entry criteria is up to date to ensure the applicant can make an informed decision and choices at relevant stages of the admissions cycle.
- Ensuring that selection processes are followed consistently and fairly by use of transparent academic and non-academic entry requirements, with decisions appropriately recorded and communicated to the central admissions team.

11.7. The applicant is responsible for:

- Ensuring they are familiar with the admissions process relevant to the programme they are applying for.
- Adhering to the Colleges procedures associated with the admissions process.
- Providing honest and accurate information and documentation about themselves for the college to provide informed advice regarding their programme and progression.
- Ensuring they inform the college of any change in circumstances, personal details such as address or emergency details.
- Attending an interview session either in person or via telephone, if required.
- Attending on campus applicant events to support transition to college, where possible.
- Confirming or declining their course offer.
- Attending an enrolment event and providing all requested information (evidence of qualifications, learner support needs, up to date personal information and finance, where applicable).
- Engaging fully with the induction and orientation activities delivered by the College.

12. Associated Documents

The following document should be read in conjunction with the Criminal Convictions Disclosure Procedure

13. Policy Monitoring and Review

The policy will be reviewed every three years unless changes to internal procedures or legislation requires earlier review

The effectiveness of this policy is reviewed through:

- Feedback from applicants on the effectiveness of the policy and procedure
- Feedback from staff on the effectiveness of the policy and procedure
- Feedback from associated stakeholders including parents, employers and education organisations as part of external reviews
- High levels of student retention and positive destination data
- Recognised successful achievement of external benchmarks and kite marking e.g. Matrix Standard accreditation and Gatsby Career Benchmarks

14. Equality Impact Assessment

(Consider whether the policy or procedures may disproportionately impact any group.)

Have you sought consultation on this policy? Details:		Yes Students Additional Learning Support Business and Development Apprenticeships Team		
Could a particular group be affected (negatively or positively)?	Impact	Description of Impact	Evidence	Mitigation/Justification
Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010				
Age	Yes	Positive	Admissions policy ensures all applicants are treated in a fair and transparent way.	
Disability	Yes	Positive	Admissions policy ensures all applicants are treated in a fair and transparent way.	
Gender Reassignment	Yes	Positive		
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Yes	Positive		
Pregnancy and maternity	Yes	Positive		
Race	Yes	Positive		
Religion or belief	Yes	Positive		
Sex	Yes	Positive		
Sexual Orientation	Yes	Positive		

Additional characteristics to consider				
Young Persons in Care & Care Leavers	Yes	Positive	Admissions policy ensures all applicants are treated in a fair and transparent way.	
Young Carers & Care Givers	Yes	Positive		
Young Parents	Yes	Positive		
Youth Offenders	Yes	Positive		
Those Receiving Free School Meals	Yes	Positive		
If there is no impact, please explain:				