

Admissions and Progression Policy

1. Context

1.1 Coleg Sir Gar is a large Further Education College that is part of the University of Wales: Trinity Saint David Group. The College has a comprehensive and broad range of academic and vocational education and training programmes. These range from Pre-Entry to graduate level, providing a service to the whole learning community.

2. Purpose of the Policy

2.1 The Admission and Progression Policy sets out the College's aims for the admission and progression of learners and describes the principles and processes used to admit learners to programmes of study.

3. Policy Development

3.1 The policy has been developed at College Management level and approved by the College Executive and Governors.

3.2 The policy has been subject to an Equality Impact and Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

4. Admissions and Progression Policy Statements

4.1 Equality of Opportunity

Coleg Sir Gar strives to be fully accessible and inclusive ensuring that an applicant for employment or a course receives neither less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, disability, gender, faith, sexual orientation, age gender, marital status, responsibility for dependants, socio-economic status nor is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable. The College promotes accessible and flexible provision and provides opportunities for all in Further and Higher Education.

Coleg Sir Gar welcome applications through the medium of Welsh and provides a range of courses that serve the needs of learners with Welsh language skills, whilst also providing a Welsh ethos and culture within the College

The College acts in accordance with its Welsh Language Scheme ensuring that prospective learners are connected with Welsh speaking Admissions staff should they wish to receive this service through the medium of Welsh All prospective learners will receive bilingual formal

correspondence. Arrangements are made for Welsh Speaking prospective learners to be interviewed through the medium of Welsh.

4.2 Applications from Students with Additional Needs

Applications from students with additional needs are considered on the same grounds as all others, however, applicants are asked to discuss their likely requirements with the College in advance to allow a reasonable time to ensure adequate support is in place.

The College will provide advice regarding the suitability of the programme and the equipment and/or support available. In a small number of cases, we may ask candidates who have experienced a recent, recurring or serious health problem to allow us to request a medical or other reports from relevant agencies regarding their condition. These reports do not form part of the selection process and will not be available to anyone except the College's Medical Health Officer.

The College Management Team is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the College is able to make adequate provision for students with additional needs and for keeping a record of the exceptional cases where a candidate is refused admission on the grounds of the relevant additional support not being available.

4.3 References and Other Checks for All Potential Students

The College is committed to supporting learner well - being and will refer to the Fitness To Study Policy should there be any concerns regarding a potential learner's safety and well –being and / or any possible impact on the safety and well-being of other potential learners.

The College will require a formal Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for applicants to some programmes. This will be made known to applicants well in advance. The outcome of this process will be taken into consideration when making a decision about admitting an individual to one of these programmes.

The College reserves the right:

- To request a reference for any potential student.

- To carry out a police check on any applicant. The outcome of such a process will be taken into consideration when making a decision about admitting an individual to the College.
- To refuse admission to applicants who have convictions that have not been spent or can never become spent. This procedure may also be invoked where information is available concerning activities outside the law or the expression of beliefs, which prima facie present a clear and immediate danger of infraction of the law.
- To refuse admission to an applicant who has previously been excluded from this or another education institution.
- Not to admit an applicant who has outstanding debts to the College.
- Not to admit an individual who has previously attended this or another education establishment and not completed courses, including all external assessments.
- Not to admit an applicant where there is evidence that they could be a threat or danger to others.

Applications falling within the categories identified within 4.3 will be considered by an Admissions Panel comprised of Senior Management representatives including Faculty Directorate representation.

4.4 International Students

The College has a limited number of places for International Students and accepts applications annually. Students must normally have an IELTS score of 4.5 or above to be considered for L3 entry and a minimum IELTS score of 5.5 to be considered for entry at L4 or above.

International students may only be considered for entry to programmes that are full time in nature and at level 3 or above. All international students must apply in the first instance to the College using the College application form.

Successful students will be formally accepted by the College but thereafter International students will have to satisfy the UK Visa and Immigration requirements in order to gain an appropriate visa for study at the College.

Overseas qualifications may be used for entry, provided that they are considered equivalent to the requirements of the particular programme being applied for.

International students will be advised in writing of fee requirements and payment methods, well in advance of the start of their programme.

4.5 Admission of Students under the age of 16

Students under the age of 16 will not normally be permitted admission to courses at the College or those delivered on behalf of the College under a third party arrangement.

The only exceptions may be where students are attending a 14-19 Network Partnership course that is supported by the College, local schools and the Local Education Authority or a specific commercial course that permits the admission of students under the age of 16.

4.6 Application Process

Applications for further education should be completed online or using the paper-based application form as early as possible within the current academic year for entry in the following academic year.

Prospective students should be aware that there is very high demand for some programmes and a limited number of places. These will be filled on a first come first served basis. The College may establish waiting lists for certain programmes and offer places as and when they become available.

4.7 Entry Requirements

Normally, the level of an individual programme, will determine the entry requirements. However, it should be noted that these are minimum and general requirements and specific entry requirements may also apply, for example, the consideration of a portfolio in Art and Design or an audition in Performing Arts. Applicants will be informed of any specific requirements for a programme at an early stage in the application process. This information is also available on the College Website and within the College Prospectus.

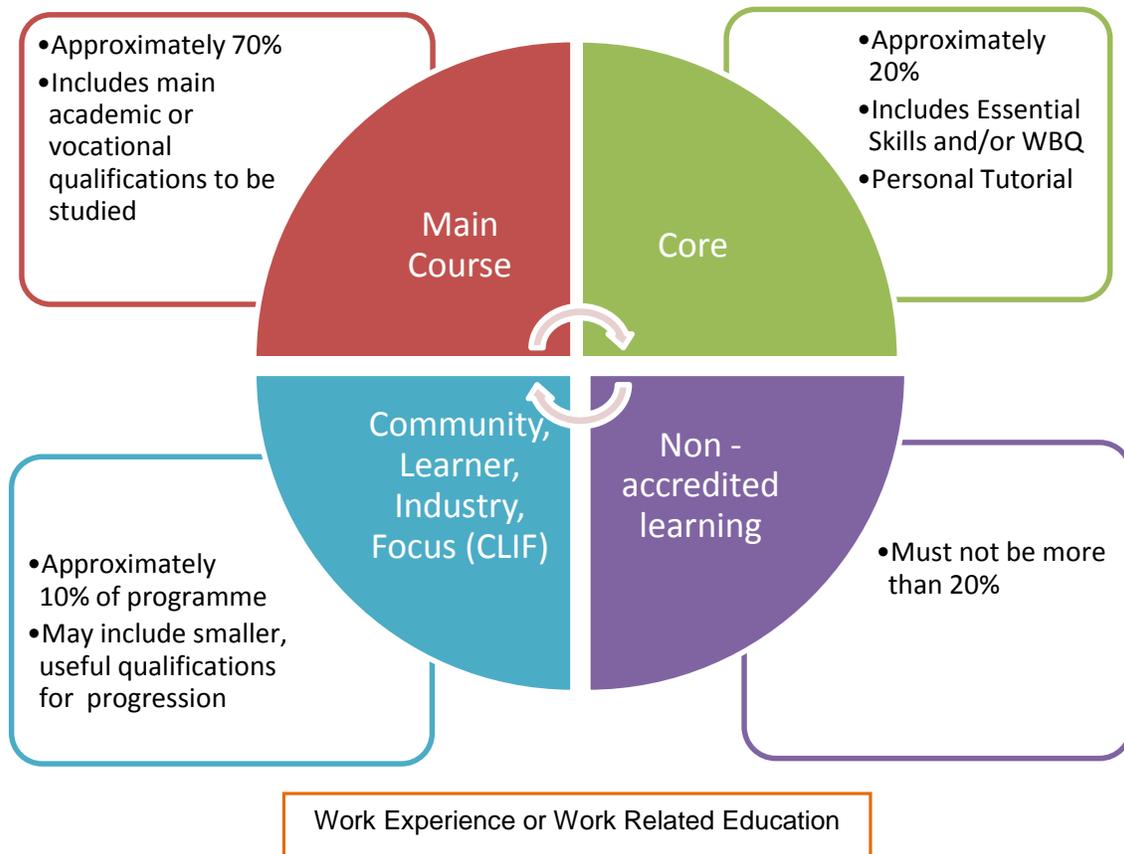
In exceptional circumstances, applicants who do not meet the normal entry requirements for a particular course may be given a place subject to specified conditions. These conditions will be made explicit to the applicant. A decision to admit an applicant under these circumstances will be at the discretion of the relevant Faculty Management Team, the Principal or his nominee.

4.8 Further Education

Introduction

Learners in post-16 education across Wales study a learning programme rather than just a main qualification. There are five main elements of a learning programme: -

- Core
- Main Qualification Aim (Main Course)
- Community, Learner, Industry, Focus Qualifications
- Non-accredited learning
- Work experience or Work Related Education



Learning programmes will be individualised for each learner. In addition to their main course, learners need to expect to achieve other qualifications relevant to their personal development and progression. These may include GCSE Mathematics, GCSE English and/or GCSE Welsh.

4.8.1 Qualification Levels

Generally, there are a number of different academic and vocational qualifications available from Entry level to Level 3. These range from the more traditional GCSE, A level and BTEC qualifications to more specialised subject related awarding qualifications and more competence based workplace NVQs.

Entry Level

These are basic courses that help build confidence, knowledge, understanding and skills and will help improve your English and Maths skills.

Level 1

These are introductory courses that develop your skills and understanding of a subject, industry or area of work. In some areas such as construction you will need to start at level 1 regardless of your previous GCSE or A Level results.

Level 2

Courses at this level build on your knowledge and skills. They provide you with a good knowledge understanding and skills in a subject or industry.

Level 3

These advanced courses provide you with detailed knowledge, understanding and skills in a subject or vocational related industry course. Level 3 courses are designed to enable you to progress to university or employment.

The Foundation Programme in Art and Design based at the Jobs Well Campus is at level 3/4. This level is a similar level to that of a first year Degree programme at University.

Progression

Learners are normally encouraged to attend one course at each level before moving up a level or progressing into employment. The College will in some instances support learners by enabling them to study another course at the same level. There would have to be exceptional circumstances however for an applicant to study a third course at the same level and this would have to be approved by an Admissions Panel comprised of Senior Management representatives including Faculty Directorate representation.

Welsh Baccalaureate (WBQ)

Learners study the Welsh Baccalaureate at Foundation (level 1), National (level 2) and Advanced (level 3) developing skills in literacy and numeracy, digital literacy, critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, personal effectiveness, planning and organisation.

Building on these skills learners complete a challenge in the following areas: enterprise and employability, global citizenship and community, demonstrating the skills to work independently and within a team. They also have the opportunity to undertake an individual project related to the vocational skills developed within the main programme of study.

At Advance Level (level 3) the WBQ is graded and is accepted and valued by an increasing number of universities

4.8.2 Essential Skills Wales (ESW) Qualifications

The College is committed to providing opportunities for learners to further develop their life skills (particularly in literacy and numeracy) to aid progression to higher levels of learning, employment or self-employment.

Essential Skills Wales (ESW) qualifications available in Communication, Application of Number and Information Communication Technology (ICT) are provided from Entry Level to Level 3.

All full time and substantial part time students (ie, studying more than 5 hours per week) will undergo a basic skills diagnostic test on entry to the College. This may lead to further diagnostic tests if necessary.

4.8.3. AS / A Levels

Students who wish to study a full time AS / A level programme will normally be expected to have achieved a minimum of six GCSEs at grades A *- C that include at least a grade C in Mathematics English Language or First Language Welsh. Students should also be aware of individual AS and AL subject requirements. These are available within Course Leaflets, the College Prospectus and on the College Website.

4.8.4 Access to Higher Education Courses

Access to Higher Education Diplomas provide a preparation for higher education (HE). They address the particular needs of those adults who may have left school early or been out of education for a number of years. Courses are specifically designed to equip students to progress to Higher Education (university level). Students will be expected to undertake an interview having previously acquired Mathematics and English GCSE at Grade C or above or having completed a Skills for Further Study course. These assessments will indicate whether a student has sufficient skills to embark on an access programme or firstly needs to undertake a Pre Access preparatory programme.

Applications from students who have already achieved Level 4 Qualifications will be assessed by the Access Admissions Panel.

4.9. Vocational Qualifications

Level 3 Vocational Qualifications

Students who wish to study a vocational qualification at Level 3, will normally be expected to have achieved a minimum of five GCSEs at grade A*-C or to have successfully completed a vocational qualification at level 2 and undertaken a successful progression interview. Progression will depend on the College's assessment of an individual and their ability to succeed on the course. This information is available within the College Prospectus on the College Website.

To gain entry into Year 2 of a Level 3 vocational learning programme students must demonstrate:

- Successful completion of the prescribed elements of their chosen learning programme as designated by the relevant curriculum area.

Level 2 Vocational Qualifications

At Level 2, there are different entry requirements for different learning programmes. Normally, students who want to study a vocational qualification at Level 2, will be expected to have achieved at least two D grades at GCSE level or to have successfully completed a vocational qualification at level 1. However, it should be noted that the attainment of a vocational qualification at level 1 does

not automatically qualify a student to progress to a level 2 course. Progression will also depend on the College's assessment of an individual and their ability to succeed on the course.

Level 1 Vocational Qualifications

Students who want to study a full time vocational qualification at Level 1 will normally have successfully completed an Entry level qualification, a Certificate of Education or achieved GCSEs at grades D to G. However, it should be noted that the attainment of any of the above courses does not automatically qualify a student to progress to a level 2 course. This will be assessed through a progression interview.

Specific entry requirements for each course can be located on the College Website and within the College Prospectus and Course Leaflets.

Entry Level Qualifications

No formal qualifications are required. Entry is subject to successful interview and on the College's assessment of an individual and their ability to succeed on the course. Discrete programmes of study at entry level can provide taster opportunities in vocational areas as well as developing independent living skills.

5.0 Higher Education

All of the College's higher education programmes are validated by The University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

As a part of the University, the College is expected to apply the principles of the Higher Education Student Admissions Policy, details of which can be found on the University website. The policy and associated procedures comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and relevant equality and diversity legislation affecting the admissions of students, and take account of sectorial best practice, including:

- The QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education; Chapter B2; Recruitment, selection and admission to higher education and Part C: Information about higher education provision
- Supporting Professionalism in Admissions -- SPA Good practice statement;
- UCAS's guidance and manuals for institutions

- The Schwartz report's principles of fair admissions;
- The requirements of relevant accrediting professional bodies;
- The requirements of the UKVI

All students must meet the minimum entry requirements specified for each higher education programme. Full time entry requirements are provided in detail on the UCAS web site under C22 Coleg Sir Gar/Carmarthenshire College www.ucas.ac.uk

All full-time undergraduate applications must be made through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). Part-time undergraduate course applications should be made using the College application form.

Applications are welcomed in Welsh or English from applicants who have the capacity to participate, together with the interest and motivation to succeed in higher education. The decision to admit a student will be taken on individual merit, demonstrated through the application process to include:

- Personal statements
- Appropriate references
- Interview and consideration of portfolio where appropriate
- Academic potential
- Assessment of prior achievement, whether by reference to academic or vocational qualifications, or prior experience described more broadly
- Ability to benefit from participation.

Applicants with specific learning difficulties or other needs are encouraged and advised to seek further advice from the college. Applications are considered on a fair basis regardless of disability or any other prejudice including age, sex or race.

The Fitness to Study Policy is available as a point of reference when considering the safety and well - being of all applicants to Higher Education programmes.

An applicant who has a relevant criminal conviction is required to state this on the application form. 'Relevant' is defined as offences against the person, whether of a violent or sexual nature, offences involving the use of Class A drugs and offences relating to the supply of controlled drugs or substances where the conviction concerns commercial drug dealing or trafficking. Convictions that

are spent (as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) are not considered to be relevant and the applicant should not reveal them. All such applications are assessed on an individual basis.