



# ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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## **Accessibility Statement**

If you have any learning difficulty, disability or health problem, that means you are unable to use the admissions policy and procedure in the way laid out in this document, or you may require additional support to help you with the process, please contact the college to discuss how the process can be adjusted to support your needs. Should you require this guide in an alternative format please contact the college.

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## Introduction:

Hereford College of Arts (HCA) is an inclusive institution which welcomes applications from potential students from all backgrounds and aims to help them achieve their full potential. This Admissions Policy applies to all applicants, including applications for full-time and part-time courses in Further and Higher Education, International applicants and applications from internal students and students enrolled on programmes at schools and colleges with whom HCA operates a Progression Agreement.

### 1. Our Mission:

To empower creativity and enrich our world through transformative arts education.

#### Values:

We support students and staff to be:

- **Collaborative:** we believe creative collaboration gives people the power to change the world.
- **Inquisitive:** we urge our students to question, seek the wider context, think critically, and use arts to engage with society
- **Brave:** we support and challenge individuals to achieve their ambitions, to tackle important issues, and to take bold creative risks
- **Inventive:** we encourage an appetite to take on problems and a resourceful, creative approach to solving them
- **Individual:** we respect the individual needs and interests of all members of our creative community, and provide a safe space for unique creative voices to develop and thrive.

### 2. Principles

Hereford College of Arts in its Mission Statement and Values recognises its responsibility to provide equality of opportunity to all potential students during the enquiry, recruitment and selection process. The college is committed to social justice and inclusivity, widening access, encouraging educational participation and to lifelong learning.

The college will ensure that all applicants are treated fairly by showing appropriate sensitivity to individual differences and that any decision about recruitment, selection, admission and progression to college courses will be considered on the basis of merit, suitability and academic qualification.

The college is committed to the elimination of all kinds of discrimination and will ensure that no applicant will be placed in any form of advantage or disadvantage for reasons of age, race, gender, health, marital status or civil partnership, ethnicity, disability, social economic background, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity.

In the Equality Act 2010, gender reassignment is defined as a person whose gender identity differs from the gender assigned to them at birth, for example, a person who was born female decides to spend the rest of his life as a man. All transsexual people share the common characteristic of gender reassignment.

To be protected from gender reassignment discrimination, applicants do not need to have undergone any specific treatment or surgery to change from their birth sex to their preferred gender. This is because changing their physiological or other gender attributes is a personal process rather than a medical one. They may be at any stage in the transition process; from proposing to reassign their gender, to undergoing a process to reassign gender, or having completed it.

The college will therefore refer in verbal, written and other communications to the applicant in the context of their preferred gender. However, the college has a legal requirement to report on applicant's enrolment through their legal birth name and gender unless there has been a legal change by the applicant either prior to or during the application or through the duration of the course. Therefore, any registration with examining bodies, external audits or legal compliance relating to data will be generated by the college under the applicant's current legal status. Operationally and with internal communications the college will refer to the student using their preferred name and gender.

The college will seek to promote and develop diversity of its student body by:

- Treating each applicant on his/her own merit
- Identifying student potential as well as acknowledging past academic or other achievements
- Ensuring that as much information as possible will be provided to allow applicants to assess their own suitability for the course
- Ensuring that publicity and promotional material reflect the diversity of the student community and that the specific admission requirements described in the course documentation will be presented in a way that no successful applicant entering the academic programme is regarded as a 'non-standard' or an 'exceptional case'.

### **3. Compliance with relevant legislation and guidelines**

The college will regularly review its policy to comply with all current legislation, changes in the national admissions and recruitment environment and in response to institutional and market changes. Review of the policy will be initiated through and approved by the Academic Board. In drafting this policy, the college has been guided by the principles first outlined by the Admissions to Higher Education Steering Group in its report- 'Fair Admissions to Higher Education: Recommendations for Good Practice Sept. 2004'. The college's Admissions Policy has been further informed by the QAA UK Quality Code – Part B: Chapter B2 Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education and has also been written with reference to recent guidelines and information listed below.<sup>1</sup>

### **4. Responsibility for Admissions within the institution**

Academic Board has overall responsibility for general issues relating to the admission of students and ensuring that the appropriate criteria for admission to courses and registration for an award are operated in line with the agreed policies.

The administration of admissions is managed centrally via the college Registry office working directly with the Academic Programme areas and the communications office.

The roles of Registry Admissions staff are to:

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<sup>1</sup> UCAS Advisors Guide and Parents Guide for entry to University or College 2020 <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/ucas-undergraduate-advice-parents-and-guardians>

SPA (Supporting Professionalism in Admissions) Good Practice: Planning and managing admissions processes Nov.2016

SPA Admissions Workshop HCA Feb 2017: Dan Shaffer Head of Professionalism SPA – 'Making admissions work for applicants and for your College'

University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) Admissions Policy June 2020 University of the Arts London (UAL) Admissions Policy 2020/2021

CMA (Competition & Markets Authority) Guides- Higher Education Providers: Consumer Law March 2015 and Undergraduate Students: Your Consumer Rights March 2015

HEFCE Information for Students: A guide to providing information to prospective undergraduate students. The requirements of UKVI

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration>

- Liaise with academic admissions tutors and communications staff about key dates in the annual admissions cycle
- Process full-time and part-time applications for all courses at the college in line with UCAS (for HE full time Applications) and college procedures
- Provide statistical data for the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Curriculum Managers and Course Coordinators/Leaders
- Deal with enquiries from potential students in a polite and courteous manner and provide any additional information in liaison with academic admissions tutors regarding entry requirements, interview preparation and scheduling as well as processing decision documentation
- Ensure that application enquiries are logged, tracked and responded to in a timely manner and that application reports are provided on a regular basis to SLT
- Agree a schedule of college wide interviews in liaison with academic tutors and communications staff and provide interview documentation for academic tutors engaged in interviews and auditions
- Provide information packs for successful applicants post interview, including details of enrolment and induction, term dates, holiday work, equipment lists, financial and bursary information, transport, accommodation and information about additional learning support.

The roles of academic admissions staff are to:

- Consider all applications received for their course of study including full-time, part-time and direct entry
- Liaise directly with registry admissions staff and additional learning support tutors in terms of arranging and conducting interviews for all applications and provide advisory interviews where appropriate
- Complete a decision document including conditions of offer, any additional work set in preparation for a second interview or reasons for rejection. Interviewing staff should also record initial assessment scores on the decision document. The decision document should be returned to registry normally within one working day for processing and response to the applicant.
- Follow up and record any areas of concern highlighted during the admissions process and inform appropriate college staff.

## **5. Transparency**

General information about the college, its courses and entry criteria are available in the College HE and FE prospectuses, on the college website (for example, applicants can link to the Information for Student guide for specific information on each undergraduate course) and in leaflets and brochures distributed individually or as part of information packs provided via UCAS Create Your Future events, admissions and recruitment fairs, college open days and information evenings, taster days and via other schools, colleges and careers information centres etc.

All of this information will be made available pre-application and in general will cover the following areas:

- Courses offered, including details of course duration, structure, mode of attendance and end qualification
- Academic entry requirements, including any specific requirements such as English Language proficiency etc.

- Details of tuition and other fees
- Accommodation details for students aged 18 years and over
- Advice on sources of financial assistance and planning, including scholarships and bursaries, Educational Maintenance Allowance (for students who live in Wales), Welsh Government Learning Grants, Advanced Learner Loan tuition fee loans and transport (FE applicants only)
- Additional Learning support
- Guidelines on methods of application and preparation for Interview or Audition, including Open days and portfolio/audition workshops dates (FE applicants only)
- Student Union
- Applications and enquiries from International students, including visa applications.

The college will seek to ensure that:

- Promotional material will not contain unfair or misleading statements about the college, its courses and services or misleading references to other institutions or awarding bodies
- The college will adhere to the Awarding Body guidelines regarding the use of marketing and publicity material
- Promotional material can on request be provided in alternative formats
- college staff follow the basic principle of responsible recruitment and work together to ensure that they are fully aware of the information that should be provided to applicants
- Responses to enquiries are appropriately managed and processed in an efficient and timely manner and normally within five working days after receipt of an enquiry
- All information regarding admissions, particularly that included on the college website is regularly updated and accurate
- Information guides for prospective undergraduate students are regularly maintained and accessible via course links on the college website.

## **6. Application Process and Procedure**

The college accepts applicants who demonstrate they have the potential and commitment to successfully fulfil the learning outcomes of the course. Entry to all courses will include the widest possible range of criteria to enable each applicant's capabilities to be fully assessed and will normally require the applicant to attend an interview and/or audition<sup>2</sup>.

The following factors (not in any order of priority) will be used when deciding whether to make an offer to a specific course:

- The applicant's past performance in public examinations
- Ability of the applicant to benefit from the proposed course of study
- Specific and general entry requirements
- Their ability to undertake specialist subject study as demonstrated in the quality of their portfolio of work, audition, personal statement and reference
- Objective assessment of any factors that affected past performance, work and or/life experience or skills based knowledge
- Attitude and aptitude to study at the appropriate level

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<sup>2</sup> All applicants applying for Performing Arts and Music courses at FE and HE level will be invited to attend an interview and/or audition. Applicants applying for Art and Design and Media/Digital Arts courses at both FE and HE levels will be invited to attend an interview and be given the opportunity to present a portfolio of work demonstrating their previous creative endeavours and prior accomplishments in a related area of the arts

- Academic potential
- Applicant's understanding of the course applied for and the appropriateness of their application
- Availability of places on the course
- Attainment of the minimum course entry requirements (all certificates must be provided in English).

## Enquiries

### Further Education (FE) Enquiries:

Applicants can make initial enquiries by emailing [registry@hca.ac.uk](mailto:registry@hca.ac.uk) or telephoning the college on 01432 273359. Applicants may request a prospectus or submit an enquiry on the Hereford College of Arts website [www.hca.ac.uk](http://www.hca.ac.uk), by emailing [enquiries@hca.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@hca.ac.uk), telephoning 01432 273359 or by visiting the college Folly Lane campus in person and collecting a prospectus from reception. Course specific enquiries will be directed to Course Leaders and or Curriculum Leaders.

### Higher Education (HE) Enquiries:

Applicants can make initial enquiries by emailing [registry@hca.ac.uk](mailto:registry@hca.ac.uk) or telephoning the college on 01432 273359. Applicants may request a prospectus or submit an enquiry on the Hereford College of Arts website [www.hca.ac.uk](http://www.hca.ac.uk), by emailing [enquiries@hca.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@hca.ac.uk), telephoning 01432 273359 or by visiting the college in person and collecting a prospectus from reception. Course specific enquiries will be directed to Course Leaders and/or Curriculum Leaders.

## Applications

### FE Applications:

Applicants can apply online on the HCA website [www.hca.ac.uk](http://www.hca.ac.uk). FE application forms are available from Folly Lane reception, emailing [registry@hca.ac.uk](mailto:registry@hca.ac.uk), or by telephoning 01432 273359. Applicants will be required to obtain a reference from their school prior to interview, where possible. Mature students over the age of 21 will need to contact the Registry office on 01432 273359 to obtain a character reference form.

There is no annual closing date for the receipt of application forms but we strongly advise that all individual applications are received by March 31 in the proposed year of entry prior to a September commencement date. Application forms received after this date will still be considered.

### HE Applications:

Applicants applying for a full-time undergraduate course at the college will need to apply through the UCAS application process which can be accessed at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com). UCAS will then forward the application to the college in advance of the college wide deadline for all undergraduate courses published annually on the college website under "How to apply for University-Level courses". The deadline for the college to receive UCAS applications for courses commencing in September is normally 15<sup>th</sup> January. However, the college will consider applications received after this deadline.

Applicants applying for a part-time undergraduate course will need to complete a Part-Time application form downloadable from the HCA website [www.hca.ac.uk](http://www.hca.ac.uk), or by email request to [registry@hca.ac.uk](mailto:registry@hca.ac.uk), or by telephoning 01432 273359. Alternatively, application forms can be collected in person from reception at the Folly Lane/College Road campus. All applications must include a reference commenting on the applicant's suitability and aptitude for study on the proposed course and would therefore normally be provided by a current tutor/teacher, employer or professional colleague.

Applicants applying for a postgraduate course will need to complete an MA Application form downloadable from the HCA website [www.hca.ac.uk](http://www.hca.ac.uk), or by email request to [registry@hca.ac.uk](mailto:registry@hca.ac.uk), or

by telephoning 01432 273359. Alternatively, application forms can be collected in person from reception at the Folly Lane/College Road campus.

### **Internal Applications for HE Courses**

Students currently studying on FE courses at HCA (or where a special arrangement already exists) who wish to apply only to the college for undergraduate study may apply directly using the Internal FE to HE Progression Application Form. The college will complete a UCAS Record of Prior Acceptance (RPA form) on behalf of the student. All applications must be supported by a reference from an appropriate tutor and be submitted by the deadline published on the application form.

Both the internal application forms are available from Folly Lane/College Road reception, emailing [registry@hca.ac.uk](mailto:registry@hca.ac.uk), or by telephoning 01432 273359.

### **HE Transfers from other institutions**

The college will consider applications from students wishing to transfer from other HE institutions at the appropriate level. For more details please see the transfer procedure here:

<https://www.hca.ac.uk/apply/how-to-apply/student-transfers>.

### **HE Advisory Interviews**

Advisory interviews are available for all students who have not yet applied but wish to obtain further course information/portfolio preparation guidance. Students wishing to have an advisory interview should either e-mail [registry@hca.ac.uk](mailto:registry@hca.ac.uk), telephone 01432 273359 or visit the College Road campus reception. Advisory interviews will normally be scheduled within 10 working days of the request being received and students are advised to bring portfolios of work including examples of previous or ongoing work which they would wish to discuss.

Following the advisory interview, students may;

- Apply via UCAS for a full-time course at the college
- Apply to HCA for a part-time course using HCA Part-Time Application Form
- Be advised to undertake further work, preparatory task or additional qualification prior to making a formal application.

### **FE advisory Interviews**

The same procedure applies for FE students but following the advisory interview, students may;

- Apply using an FE application form
- Be required to undertake further work, preparatory task or additional qualification prior to making a formal application

In addition to individual interviews, the college offers portfolio and audition clinics. Further details can be found on the HCA website [www.hca.ac.uk](http://www.hca.ac.uk).

Students wishing to have an advisory interview should either e-mail [registry@hca.ac.uk](mailto:registry@hca.ac.uk), telephone 01432 273359 or visit the Folly Lane campus reception.

### **HE Interviews<sup>3</sup>**

Applicants eligible for interview are carefully considered by experienced staff in order that their ability to benefit from the course and their level of educational attainment can be measured. Current students will sometimes be involved in the interview process and in any case will be available in studios to provide further information about the course if requested by the applicant.

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<sup>3</sup> The preferred option for conducting interviews/auditions will be for the student to visit the college in person but online interviews may also be offered. The college can arrange for the interview/audition to be conducted online and the college may request a portfolio to be submitted in advance in an appropriate digital format or accessed via the applicant's personal website. In each case the applicant is required to authenticate the work as being their own and be prepared to discuss the work in detail during the online interview. Applications must be made as normal via the UCAS application process.

Open/Interview days enable prospective applicants/interviewees further opportunity to find out more about the facilities and resources available to the course. Interviews are designed to be informal and are treated very much as a 'first tutorial' to encourage students to present and discuss their work in a confident and considered manner.

The admissions tutors consider:

- The quality and range of work presented
- The level of creative curiosity, awareness and maturity of the applicant displayed during the interview
- The academic capacity of the individual
- The ability of the individual to meet the academic learning outcomes of the course
- The written application, record of academic and or life achievement and tutorial references submitted by the applicant, together with any other relevant material they wish to put forward to support their application.

The Course Leader, in liaison with Registry, will ensure that:

- Admissions tutors are properly briefed and that all documentation appropriate to the application is available at interview e.g. UCAS form, Recognition of Prior Certified Learning (RPCL), testimonials, general and subject specific criteria for entry
- Applicants are advised on the approximate cost of the study programme
- Admission assessments, including interviews and auditions are conducted on an objective basis
- Applicants have access to information in advance of the interview process, and are made aware of its purpose and the process and timescale for the notification of final decisions
- Appropriate arrangements are made for applicants to present as appropriate any work they feel relevant to their submission
- Applicants are given equal opportunity to present the best case for their admission to the course
- Applicants are given encouragement, time and opportunity to ask questions
- At the end of the interview applicants are given the opportunity to clarify any aspect of the discussion about which they may be unclear or unhappy
- Arrangements are put in place for the provision of further information to applicants if required
- Decisions resulting from the interview are properly recorded on the interview decision document.

The college publishes to all candidates clear guidance on the interview process and expectations of work to be brought as a portfolio.<sup>4</sup>

Variations to this procedure may occur depending on the time of year and number of applications received.

### **FE Interviews and Auditions**

All applicants will be sent a letter inviting them to attend for an interview/audition, along with interview/audition guidance notes. The interview is normally scheduled within 10-15 working days of receipt of the application. Applicants are required to confirm in advance their attendance at the interview/audition.

The interview will cover;

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<sup>4</sup> All HE applicants will be sent a letter inviting them to an interview, together with guidance notes which provides specific information on portfolio and interview and audition preparation plus guidelines on the content and quality of work that Admissions tutors are expecting to see.

- Entry Requirements
- The student's suitability for the intended programme of study
- An outline of the intended programme of study e.g. aim, content, Functional Skills/GCSE English and Maths etc.
- Approximate cost of the study programme for the student
- Financial support options e.g. 16-19 bursary/residential bursary, free meals etc.
- Choice of alternative programmes of study where applicable
- Approximate exemptions and credits where applicable
- Information regarding accommodation where applicable
- Information regarding transport where applicable
- Information regarding the IELTS qualification where applicable
- Learning difficulties/disabilities/health problems where applicable
- Any criminal Convictions declared by an Applicant
- Progression routes in relation to further study/future career options upon achievement
- Additional Learning Support (where applicable)
- Safeguarding issues (where applicable)
- Confirmation from the applicant that the work in their portfolio is their own.

FE Applicants in need of additional learning support will be identified through the application and interview process. A member of the Additional Learning Support team may attend the interview in order to establish any additional learning support needs and to seek permission to contact the student's previous school/college. If a member of the Additional Learning Support team is not able to attend the interview, an Additional Learning Support form will be sent to the applicant to complete and return prior to the interview. Support will be provided by the Additional Learning Support Tutors and appropriate arrangements put in place for those who enrol.

### **International Applications**

FE and HE applicants living outside the UK and Ireland (e.g. applicants classed as international) will be initially requested to complete a questionnaire to check eligibility. Applicants will then be given the opportunity to submit their portfolio via digital format or on a CD/DVD to the college. The college will then arrange for the interview to be conducted online which is a requirement of UK Visas and Immigration. Offers will normally be made within 10 working days.

### **Non-attendance at Interview – FE & HE applicants**

Students are given two opportunities to attend an interview. If the student fails to attend or contact the college on both occasions, the college will automatically withdraw their application.

### **FE & HE Second Interviews**

Following the initial interview, applicants may be advised that in order for the college to progress their application they will need to complete additional work and/or specific task subject to which they may be invited to attend a second interview. Applicants will be advised of this at the interview and informed of the reasons why the college is placing such conditions on their application. Applicants will subsequently receive a letter confirming the details of any additional requirements, submission requirements and an agreed deadline for completion.

Following the receipt of the work, applicants may be required to attend a second interview and in either case will receive a decision on their application within 10 working days.

### **Interview Decisions**

Details of the applicant's performance at interview, including comments on the quality of their portfolio of work presented and conditions of offer or non- acceptance will be recorded on an interview decision document and retained on file. Non-acceptance decisions for HE and FE courses must be countersigned by the Head of HE/FE

Following the interview, the applicant will receive a letter from the college indicating the outcome of the interview normally within 10 working days. The UCAS system will also be updated for HE applications.

The outcome of the interview can be one of the following;

- Unconditional offer\*
- Conditional offer
- Second interview required/set work
- Rejection\*\* – feedback is available on written request
- Recommend for another course at Hereford College of Arts. (A new application may be required).

Please note that the progress of all FE students will be reviewed within the first 42 days of the course.

\*For those students that receive unconditional offers and are still studying, it is a college expectation that the students still complete the course on which they are currently enrolled.

\*\* HCA retains the discretion to reject an applicant where, in the judgment of the college it is not in their best interests to join the course. For example - where the college does not anticipate their being able to achieve the qualification. All rejections will be reviewed and signed off by the Head of HE/FE.

### **Key Information (HE only)**

Applicants will receive additional key information along with their offer letter.

### **Unconditional offers (HE only)**

Unconditional offers may be made under the following circumstances:

- applicants have already met the entry requirements
- applicants are mature (age 21 or over)
- Applicants have demonstrated the necessary skills/abilities at interview/audition in order to succeed on the course.

### **Responding to Decisions (HE)**

UCAS applicants must either accept or decline their offer via their online UCAS application within the published UCAS deadline. The college requests that part time applicants and applicants who have applied on an internal FE to HE application form, e-mail Registry to confirm their acceptance of a place or decline their offer. Clear informative course information will be sent to applicants at least 4 weeks prior to the beginning of the programme.

### **Responding to Decisions (FE)**

The college requests that all students respond to the offer of a place within 10 working days by either emailing [registry@hca.ac.uk](mailto:registry@hca.ac.uk) or telephoning the Registry Department on 01432 273359. Course information packs will be sent to applicants at least 4 weeks prior to the beginning of the programme.

### **Late applications (HE)**

Applicants who do not hold any offers will automatically be entered into clearing. Students are advised to contact the institution of their choice to check availability and arrange interviews.

The college can access the student application form via the student personal ID number/UCAS application number.

Late applications received after the start of the academic year will be considered on a case by case basis.

### **Late applications (FE)**

The college will consider late applications on an individual merit basis for all FE courses until the October half term (application needs to be submitted and reviewed prior to this). Applications received after the deadline will be considered for the following academic year. If the course is at capacity then a waiting list will be introduced. The waiting list will be prioritised based on date of application received.

### **Confirmation of Results (HE)**

The college will automatically receive confirmation of the student's results through UCAS. The MIS Officer (Exams) will confirm results of all internal applicants. Students who applied through clearing will need to send proof of their results, to the college, prior to enrolment. Students who do not meet the conditions of their offer should contact the college in the first instance. The college will consider each individual case on merit.

### **Confirmation of Results (FE)**

Students who do not meet the conditions of their offer should contact the college on the day of their GCSE/ A-Level results. Where the results are not achieved, the college will attempt to offer an alternative course that will enable the applicant to progress.

Applicants must produce evidence of qualifications obtained before enrolment can take place.

### **Withdrawing an Application (FE and HE)**

Students can withdraw their application at any stage of the admissions process. The student must confirm their withdrawal in writing to the college and also provide a reason for monitoring purposes. If the application was made via UCAS, the student must update their online application forms.

### **Deferring an Application (FE and HE)**

Students can defer their application at any stage of the admissions process. Students must confirm their deferral in writing to the college. If the application was made via UCAS, the student must update their online application form.

Deferred students will be contacted at least six months in advance of the course commencement date to reactivate their application. Please note that students who defer their place will be charged the fee set for the year of entry.

## **7. Widening Participation**

Equality and Diversity is an integral part of life at Hereford College of Arts. HCA are committed to the principles of equal opportunities and respect for individuals in creating and maintaining an inclusive environment. We value and celebrate diversity, seeing this as critical to achieving our strategic aims and long-term success.

The college works closely with a range of external stakeholders, including schools, colleges and formal and informal networks. We work with these partners and students to develop and deliver targeted programmes of outreach activities; for example, engaging workshops and talks, interventions that aim to break down barriers to progression to a career in the arts and offering appropriate advice and guidance to applicants and potential applicants at key stages of their journey.

See the Access and Participation Plan on the website here: <https://www.hca.ac.uk/about-us/schools-and-colleges-hub/access-and-participation>

## **8. Non-standard entry qualifications**

Applicants who do not satisfy the normal entrance requirement but offer other qualifications and or relevant experience will be considered on an individual basis subject to satisfactory information being provided at interview.

## **9. Applicants with Disabilities/Learning Difficulties and/or Health Problems**

The college seeks to ensure equal opportunities and access for people with disabilities/learning difficulties and/or health problems and to encourage them to apply for places.

The policy also seeks to ensure that those responsible for the recruitment of students do not discriminate, either directly or indirectly against people with disabilities/learning difficulties and/or health problems.

The applicant has a responsibility to inform the college of any additional support needs they have at all stages of their application to enable the college to plan appropriately. If the applicant does not provide this information, it may mean that the college is unable to make the reasonable adjustments and appropriately support their needs after enrolment.

As part of its admissions process the college monitors all applications to ensure that it is able to respond appropriately and make reasonable adjustment to support any student with a disability/learning difficulty and/or health problem.

### **FE Students**

Registry will notify the Additional Learning Support Department of any FE applicant, who has been invited for an interview, or who considers themselves as having a learning difficulty/disability or health problem.

Admissions tutors engaged in the interview and admissions process must check all applications to see if a student has declared a disability/learning difficulty and/or health problem. If so, they should liaise with a member of the Additional Learning Support team to evaluate the extent of the student's disability/learning difficulty and/or health problem and, in consultation with the student, confirm the level of reasonable adjustment that can be made at Course level to support the student's needs.

FE applicants with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will need to forward a copy of their EHCP to the Registry Department prior to their interview. In addition, applicants will be required to complete a basic questionnaire in relation to their EHCP prior to their interview and forward it to the Registry Department.

EHCP applicants with High Needs will be offered a place subject to the Local Authority agreeing to fund the support package.

## **10. Procedures for supporting students with learning difficulties/disabilities and/or health problems**

### **HE students with learning difficulties/disabilities and/or health problems**

- There is pre-entry advice for students who disclose their learning difficulty/disability and/or health problem on application;
- Information about specialist support is sent to all students who are offered a place at the college;

- Students who self-refer or who are referred by tutors will undergo an advisory meeting carried out by Academic Mentoring staff;
- Where a student does not have a current diagnostic assessment report, or has not previously been assessed as having a Specific Learning Difficulty, the team will support the student to arrange for a full assessment to be carried out by either a specialist assessor or, for example, in the case of mental health issues, refer a student to their consultant. It is the student's responsibility to provide this report. The Academic Mentoring Co-ordinator may also identify appropriate interim support for students at this point depending on their apparent level of need;
- If the above assessment clearly identifies a need, the student will be advised and supported to apply for a Disabled Students Allowance. This requires the student to complete and send a DSA application form and a copy of the assessment to Student Finance;
- If the application is accepted the student will be contacted by Student Finance advising them to arrange a Needs Assessment to identify the support and equipment required to help them on their course;
- Student Finance has to approve the recommendations on the Access Report;
- If the recommendations are approved Student Finance will instruct the student to contact the suppliers of the equipment to arrange delivery; Only the provider identified to provide support will be contacted by Student Finance and will receive a copy of the student's Needs Assessment.
- If support is not allocated to Hereford College of Arts, the Academic Mentoring Co-ordinator will have no knowledge of a student's difficulties or disabilities without the student disclosing and actively sharing information. The HE Academic Mentoring Co-ordinator communicates with course teams regarding appropriate compensatory measures as identified by UWTSD.
- Copies of each students' compensatory measures document is made available to all course leaders and individual students outlining appropriate reasonable adjustments in all areas of their studies as outlined by UWTSD
- All details will be retained in the student's file within the Academic Mentoring Department and will be made available to the Finance Department to enable invoicing of relevant funding bodies.

### **FE students with learning difficulties/disability and/or health problem**

Students can disclose their learning difficulty/disability and/or health problem on application, during their interview, at enrolment, during tutorials or at any time during the year;

- At this point students are asked to complete a consent form enabling Additional Learning Support Department to request information regarding current support, previous diagnostic assessments, examination access arrangements, and information regarding any possible Educational Health and Care Plans in place from previous schools/colleges. NB: if a student with an Educational Health and Care Plan has high needs, the offer of a place at college will be subject to the Local Authority agreeing to fund the support package
- The Additional Learning Support Department will request information regarding students' educational needs from previous schools/colleges.
- Additional Learning support staff may attend identified interviews or arrange for specialist staff to attend for students with disabilities such as hearing or visual impairment if appropriate;
- Additional Learning Support staff meets all students enrolling during enrolment to discuss any concerns, support needs, or disclosure of difficulties, disabilities and/or health problems;
- At enrolment students sign an agreement with the college to attend extra tutorial support sessions if it is considered necessary to help them progress on their programme of study.

- Information regarding the students learning support needs is shared by the Additional Learning Support Department, with Curriculum Leaders/Course Leaders and any relevant staff for Health and Safety purposes as appropriate.

## 11. Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL)

All HE courses seek to recruit applications from as wide a range of students as possible. Applicants who may not meet the formal qualification requirement of a course but who can demonstrate (by other means) equivalent educational attainments will be considered. Students with RPCL will be offered a place subject to approval by the Awarding Body. Further details of UWTSD requirement regarding recognition of Prior Learning Procedure can be found online at <http://www.uwtSD.ac.uk/academic-office/> Academic Quality Handbook 2020/21 Chapter 6 and Chapter 10.

The following RPCL principles apply:

- Recognition of prior achievement will be considered at interview. Applicants should bring along evidence of previous qualifications or experience, for example, a transcript or certificate, together with details of module descriptors.
- Responsibility lies with the candidate for the submission of acceptable evidence of prior achievement;
- Responsibility lies with the college Course Leader/Registry for ensuring that the applicant is fully informed of the kind of evidence required and has access to advice if required.

Where an applicant seeks admission with advanced standing, and therefore the formal accreditation of prior learning, the following principles will apply:

- In recognising prior achievement, only credit for learning related to the course objectives will be awarded, and submitted evidence of learning will be judged in relation to its relevance to the course of study to be followed, including the balance between theoretical and practical work
- The assessment of prior achievement only confers eligibility; it does not itself provide a right of entry
- The college will be required to claim accreditation of the applicant's prior learning with the relevant Awarding Body, prior to enrolment.
- Students will be unable to enrol until the Awarding Body has approved the RPCL application.

Applications for RPCL will be considered by the Course Leader in the first instance, who will require documentary evidence of prior achievement from the candidate which will be mapped against the intended learning outcomes of the module(s) in question and recorded in a written format.

Applicants should submit all RPCL evidence (RPCL application form, transcript/certificate and learning outcomes) prior to enrolment.

Any recommendations should be discussed with the Course Leader prior to the completion of the Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning form. A completed application form and all supporting evidence should be submitted to Registry who will forward relevant forms to the Awarding Body for authorisation.

All approved RPCL will be reported to the Examination Board and be ratified for the award of credit.

In the event of an appeal against a decision, this will be referred to the Validating Body – UWTSD.

## **12. International Applicants (Non UK/Ireland)**

International applicants include all applications from non UK domiciled individuals.

Admissions Tutors should liaise with Registry staff for information and advice about European and overseas qualifications to ensure that appropriate procedures are followed and that a standard approach to overseas applications are maintained.

All students whose first language is not English should have met the college's minimum English language requirement before commencing the course. The standard requirement for all HE undergraduate courses is CEFR level B2. Please refer to the Visa and Immigrations website: <https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/knowledge-of-english> for further information about English language requirements/equivalents.

International students applying for FE study should note that the college is only able to offer places to overseas) students wishing to study the Level 3 Diploma in Foundation Studies course.

For any overseas HE applicant it must be made clear that acceptance on a course is subject to the student obtaining the appropriate student visa. Without a student visa the college cannot accept that student onto the course. The college in accepting the student will be acting as that student's sponsor and will provide the relevant information to support the student's visa application including the issuing of a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) number, which is supplied by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). Overseas students applying through UCAS will be required to enter passport details whilst completing their UCAS application form.

Detailed information regarding the visa application process can be found on the UKVI website: <https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/apply>.

Further information for international students can also be found on the college website: <http://www.hca.ac.uk/Students/International-Students>.

It must also be made clear to the applicant the approximate level of fees that will have to be paid to the college and that these fees will need to be paid annually and in advance of enrolment in order to fulfil visa requirements. The College Accountant should be contacted for any further information.

## **13. Criminal Convictions**

The college requires both FE and HE applicants to declare any criminal convictions (including spent convictions).

### **HE Students**

Students are required to notify the college about any criminal convictions (including spent convictions) within 15 working days upon receipt of their offer letter. Students should declare their criminal conviction by emailing [registrycc@hca.ac.uk](mailto:registrycc@hca.ac.uk). Upon receipt of this email the applicant will be asked to complete a questionnaire which is sent to the designated safeguarding leads. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will make contact with the applicant within 10 working days of receipt of the questionnaire. Each case will be treated on its own merit and a risk assessment will be completed by the DSL. The applicant will be notified of the outcome of the risk assessment.

### **FE Students**

Students are required to declare any criminal convictions (including spent convictions) on the application form. The college will refer the applicant to the DSL to follow up. The DSL will decide whether they or a safeguarding representative will need to attend the applicants interview alongside the member of academic staff. Each case will be treated on its own merit and a risk assessment will

be completed by the DSL. The applicant will be notified of the outcome of the interview within the usual timescale.

#### **14. Feedback and Complaints**

Any applicant who has been unsuccessful in their application and who wishes to receive feedback should contact the college Registry Admissions Staff who will request the relevant academic programme area to provide any advice and guidance to the applicant. Applicants must make such requests in writing within 5 working days of notification of the admission decision and should note that feedback will normally be given on request only.

Under the Data Protection Act a request for feedback should come from the applicant or from someone that the applicant gives express and voluntary consent in writing, to act on their behalf, such as a school teacher/advisor or parent.

Feedback will be limited to the applicant's profile in relation to the entry criteria for the course(s) applied for.

Applicants requesting feedback will not be discriminated against in any further applications on the basis of such a request.

The college recognises that applicants who are not successful in their application may be disappointed and undertakes to provide constructive feedback to those who are not offered a place on a course, upon receipt of a request in writing.

The college undertakes to handle applications in a fair and consistent manner and makes provision for an appeal or complaint about an admissions decision to be made only on the grounds of:

- A procedural irregularity
- Evidence of bias or prejudice
- New material information which may have affected the decision. (In this instance reasons why this information was not made available to the college at the time of application must be given and failure to do so may impact on the progression of the appeal).

Applicants wishing to lodge an appeal or complaint about an admissions decision or wishing to enquire about the admission decision appeals or complaints process should contact the College Complaints officer at [complaintsadvice@hca.ac.uk](mailto:complaintsadvice@hca.ac.uk)

#### **15. The College's right to refuse admission**

The college has the right to refuse entry to persons who have previously been excluded from the college or have disciplinary actions outstanding.

Where a student has been formally excluded from the college, decisions to re-enrol the student will be made on an individual basis.

Students will only be readmitted to the college where they are able to demonstrate that they have made sustained efforts to resolve the issues that resulted in their exclusion and can show evidence that they have made positive progress during the time that they have not been in attendance at the college.

If an applicant has a history of high risk behaviour, which may pose a risk to the health and safety of themselves or other members of the college community, the college has the right not to allow these applicants to enrol.

The college will undertake a risk assessment in all such cases.

The college may place conditions on those applicants who wish to return to the college whose attendance or behaviour has previously not been of an appropriate or acceptable standard.

The college reserves the right to refuse admission to a student who previously attended the college but failed to make sufficient effort towards successfully completing their studies.

The college reserves the right not to admit an applicant who has any outstanding debts to the college.

## **16. Training and Development**

All college staff who are involved in the recruitment, selection, interview and admissions of applicants will receive training in admissions and will be made aware of the College's admissions policy and procedures.

New staff involved with admissions will receive training and regular staff development events will be organised to ensure that all staff are made aware of any new internal or external policy developments which potentially impact upon admissions policy and procedure.

Admissions staff are actively encouraged to participate in relevant professional activities such as UCAS Fairs, workshops, conferences and awarding body staff development events to ensure their knowledge of admissions are regularly updated.

## **17. Scope**

This admissions policy and procedure will apply to all applicants to college courses who are eligible for post-16 education.

## **18. Policy approval and review**

Hereford College of Arts Admissions Policy and Procedure is in scope for review during 2023 and again in 2026.

Review of the policy will be initiated through and approved by the HCA Academic Board.