

Admissions Policy 2021/22

APPROVED BY (SELT) ON (February 2022)

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| Applies to: | |
| Harrogate College | X |
| Keighley College | X |
| Leeds City College | X |
| Leeds Conservatoire | |
| White Rose Academies Trust | |

CHANGE CONTROL

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1. ADMISSIONS POLICY

This policy sets out the overarching principles of a fair and transparent approach to all full-time and part-time FE college admissions across Leeds City College, Leeds Sixth Form College, Keighley College and Harrogate College. This includes flexible start, full-cost and the Community and ESOL provision.

Appendices to this policy include SEND admissions, 14-16 Apprenticeship Academy students and 14-16 Skills Development Programme at the Mabgate Campus.

2. POLICY AIMS

- 2.1. This policy aims to support college staff to guide all potential students onto a course that is most appropriate for their needs, skills and aspirations; thus improving motivation, retention, achievement, success rates and outcomes for students.

3. APPLICANT ENTITLEMENTS

All applicants are entitled to the following:

1. Pre-Application

- Appropriate and accurate information; this should be comprehensive and published in a timely manner such that it helps inform choice and be available in a variety of formats to ensure accessibility for all applicants.
- Information that includes details of course content, costs, entry criteria, progression opportunities and other relevant detail including method of application.
- Advice and guidance to enable applicants to make informed and appropriate choices prior to application.
- To be signposted to appropriate support services at the earliest opportunity.

2. Application

- Access to an appropriate format and method of applying or registering interest in a course.
- Have help to complete an application if necessary.
- Give details of any learning support needs they may have, knowing that that they will be assessed in confidence in accordance with published service standards.
- Have their application or register of interest acknowledged within three working days.
- Use the college information, advice and guidance service and to be offered alternative provision or referred to other learning providers where appropriate.
- Be referred to appropriate support services in college or provided by external agencies.
- Confidential and appropriate use of personal data in line with legislation and the college Data Protection Policy.

4. INTERVIEW / APPLICANT BRIEFING

The interview/applicant briefing (where appropriate) forms part of the lengthier process of holistic assessment where information is collected from a variety of sources. The information is needed to guide applicants onto the most appropriate course and level to give students the best chance of succeeding and achieving their aspirations.

Where an interview or applicant briefing is not required for entry to a course, applicants are entitled to notification of the next steps with regard to their application within 15 working days. This may include notification of an enrolment date, or that a date will be given in due course.

All applicants for full-time courses, apprenticeships and identified part-time courses are entitled to an admissions interview and/or applicant briefing. The opportunity for students to arrange an interview is available within five working days of receipt of application or expression of interest. We will continue to contact potential students to offer an interview by various mediums of communication throughout the year.

Interview communication should include clear information regarding the time, date and venue for their interview alongside the documentation they will need to bring with them and the preparation they need to undertake in advance of interview.

The purpose of the interview/applicant briefing is to:

- Provide information on the college and courses within the chosen school.
- Assess suitability in terms of academic ability, aspirations, motivation and personal attributes.
- Establish the appropriate level of course for the candidate.
- Check the applicant understands the content of their study program, progression pathways, and college expectations.
- Discuss expectations, workload and any out of college study that may be required
- Provide the candidate an opportunity to disclose support needs of any kind and discuss a support package.
- Inform the candidate of any fees, exam fees and any associated course costs such as equipment, clothing, books and study trips.
- Enable the interviewer to direct the applicant to additional college services where required,
- Such as finance, information around childcare and learning support.
- Allow candidates to ask questions to enable them to assess suitability of the course for their needs.
- At interview/applicant briefing (where appropriate) all candidates are entitled to:
- An interview with a positive and informed member of staff who has received the necessary training from their manager to carry out this role.
- To be accompanied to interview by a parent, carer or other appropriate adult where necessary and if required.

5. FUNCTIONAL AND SKILL ASSESSMENT

Where appropriate, initial and diagnostic assessments for literacy, language, numeracy, IT and further skills assessments form part of the process to help identify the most appropriate main qualification and associated qualifications including English and maths. This should be completed before or as part of the induction to a course.

6. OFFER

All candidates should be informed of the outcome of their interview, ideally at the end of the interview. Where this is not possible or an offer of a place cannot be made, they should receive information about the outcome of the interview within 10 working days of their interview, by the interviewer.

Where a new learning support need has been disclosed at interview, particularly where the student may have significant support requirements, it is important that the tutor discusses this with their head of department. This is so that student requirements can be agreed before an offer of a place is to be confirmed.

Possible outcomes of an interview are:

- a) Conditional Offer – The candidate is made an offer of a place on a suitable course subject to meeting one or more conditions by a specified time. This may include attainment of particular grades, receipt of a satisfactory reference or attendance of further assessment activities. Some candidates may be made an offer subject to agreement of a probationary behavioural or attendance contract at enrolment stage.
- b) Unconditional Offer – No formal conditions attached to the offer (subject to funding and availability).
- c) No Offer – Where it has been discussed with the candidate that no suitable course is available within the faculty.
- d) Referral to another department or careers - Where a course option may be suitable in another faculty or where no course is identified a referral to careers to identify more career options.

Where no offer has been made, applicants are entitled to a full explanation of the decision and must be directed to suitable support either within an alternative curriculum area or where this is not clear, the candidate should be referred to IAG services, external support services or other learning providers.

All decisions should be documented at the earliest possible stage using the college outcome of interview record including online. Decisions should also be documented using one of the following methods: college offer card, email, letter or phone call.

7. REFERENCES

Wherever appropriate, references will be sought at offer stage by the curriculum.

The purpose of a reference is to place applicants on a level of course most suitable for their needs and skills, and to identify areas of support for the candidate. Issues highlighted on the reference such as attendance, punctuality and behaviour need to be discussed within the context of the offer, and are not in themselves a reason for refusal of a place.

8. APPEALS

Initial queries regarding admissions decisions should be handled informally by the head of the curriculum department. Where no satisfactory outcome can be agreed, all applicants have the right to appeal a decision by writing formally to the head of student recruitment, who will convene a review panel within 15 working days.

9. KEEP WARM

The college Student Recruitment and Admissions team, in conjunction with Curriculum teams, will engage throughout the year with applicants, and those made an offer of a place. Providing opportunities for information and access to support services and/ or to enable applicants to confirm the suitability of their course choice. This may take the form of:

- Keep in touch emails, mail shots or text messages.
- Social media such as Facebook and Instagram.
- Invitations to open events.
- Schools outreach.
- Taster sessions.
- Summer school activities.

10. ENROLMENT

Applicants should be contacted at the earliest possible opportunity to book a suitable enrolment date via our online booking system. This communication should include clear information regarding:

- The time, date and venue for their enrolment.
- Documentation they will need to bring with them to enable enrolment.
- Details of fees payable, including additional course costs.
- Details of funds available to support students.
- Learner loan information for applicants aged 19 and over.

At enrolment, candidates should be given full opportunity to confirm the suitability of their course choice and be offered appropriate support where necessary.

Applicants who have disclosed learning support needs are entitled to appropriate support during their enrolment where necessary and if required, this is to be arranged through the curriculum team.

Late applicants, from 1 August onwards for full-time courses, who have not completed the admissions process already, should be given the opportunity to access appropriate support and information to help them make informed course choices.

11. INTERNAL APPLICATIONS / INTERNAL PROGRESSION

The college actively encourages the internal progression route for current students wishing to progress to another substantial programme of study at college and will ensure that the process is streamlined and aids progression.

Current students will be notified of a deadline for progression applications which should ideally be completed within the tutorial or other part of their current course.

All such applicants will have an individual discussion with their tutor about suitability for progression, and will be notified of the outcome of this.

In principle, the department from which the student is progressing is responsible for their student's successful progression to another course. For 14 to 18-year-old students, there is an opportunity for all students to progress subject to them achieving the academic grades required for entry to their chosen course. Where there is a technical skills element, students may be asked to demonstrate that they meet the required standard. For students aged 19 and over, all offers are also subject to funding regulations.

Luminate Education Group is an inclusive organisation and will make reasonable adjustments where appropriate based on individual needs. Conditions may be attached to any offer of a place, such as obtaining required grades, or improvement to attendance and punctuality or behaviour in line with the college's Positive Behaviour Policy.

If a student is declined a place of study, the department receiving the application must provide valid reasons in case of decline and offer a suitable alternative.

The sending department must identify alternative options with the students, including external opportunities where appropriate.

It is important that ongoing learning support needs are considered during the application process. Internal applicants are encouraged to disclose continuing or new support needs on application.

The college has a statutory responsibility to provide all 16 to 18-year olds with independent information about all progression routes. Where appropriate, referrals can be made to the Student Services Guidance Team throughout the process.

Students who are unlikely to continue studying in college and who are at risk of becoming Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) will be referred to the Student Services Guidance Team or the National Careers Service.

Enrolment for internal progression students will take place between the beginning of the Easter term and the summer break. Those who need to pay may be invited to special enrolment sessions during the summer period.

The college also has a duty to inform the local authority if a young person aged 16 or 17 has dropped out of learning.

For non-completers and in-year transfers, departments must follow the same processes as listed above.

Successful Transition and Destination

12. INCLUSIVE PROVISION INTERNAL ADMISSIONS

It is the intention of this process that all students referred from the departments named below will be able to successfully progress into all vocational areas of study.

Departments included

- 14+ Apprenticeship Academy (Park Lane Campus)
- 14-16 Skills Development Programme (Mabgate Campus)
- Foundation in FE (Somerville House)
- Enterprise and Employability (Park Lane Campus)
- ESOL

Step 1 - (Course Leader to Course Leader) The referring departments will set up a meeting with vocational heads to discuss potential students one-by-one. This will ensure that the department has the full information to support progression, and is informed of the reason for the recommendation, including a summary report for each student. A face-to-face discussion should take place about each student being recommended. Further meetings must be held on an ad hoc basis for any students who have not yet decided on their progression route at that point.

Step 2 - Where a place has been agreed, the referring department will complete the internal progression system to apply to the department with support from the referring team if necessary. If a student is not accepted at step one or at point of enrolment and the referring department disagrees, then meetings with heads from each department should take place to discuss the student further. The course leader will need to prepare a report outlining the reason why the student has been unsuccessful. A meeting is to be held with the referring department to outline the reason for the decision. If no agreement is reached, then the referral will be escalated to ELT if necessary.

Step 3 - Interviews will be set up by the vocational department and the referring department should be provided with details for this so that they are able to support the student and/or attend the interview. It is expected at this point that the student will be provided with an offer of a place.

13. SAFEGUARDING

Luminate Education Group prioritises the safety of all its students through everything we do. The admissions service will ensure that safeguarding is embedded throughout all processes supporting this policy, in line with Safeguarding Policy. We specifically ask feeder schools to identify to us applicants who may have a safeguarding need so that we can actively engage with the feeder school regarding the applicant and put into place any necessary measures, as well as arrange formal handovers for students who enrol. The local authority also informs the

college of 'Children Looked After', so that we can ensure that appropriate support measures are in place for such learners

14. CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

Luminate Education Group welcomes applications from ex-offenders and the college considers each application on its merits. If an applicant declares a criminal conviction, the Admissions team requests more information using a questionnaire.

The Safeguarding team carries out an assessment of the information, and at this stage further information and references may be collected from probation workers and youth offending workers before a decision to interview the applicant is made.

Where the offences demonstrate a higher level of risk, applicants will be invited to a formal meeting with the safeguarding manager for a full assessment of risk to take place. The outcome of this is either:

- Decision to forward for curriculum interview, either with or without pertinent information being shared or conditions being attached.
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- Decision to refuse the applicant a place. In such a case the application will be informed in writing.

Confidentiality is of paramount importance; all procedures take account of Data Protection Legislation and the college Data Protection Policy, and all information relating to an applicant's disclosure is kept within the recruiting curriculum teams. Where a course requires a Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check, information may be shared between the Safeguarding team and appropriate members of curriculum staff to facilitate this process.

15. COMPLAINTS

Initial queries or concerns regarding any aspect of the admissions process should be handled informally by the Student Recruitment and Admissions team, in conjunction with the relevant department.

Where no satisfactory outcome can be agreed, the college complaints procedure should be followed.

16. MONITORING, REVIEW AND QUALITY

The head of student recruitment and customer experience and the director for quality will ensure that implementation is monitored via:

- Statistics presented and analysed regularly for Senior Leadership team.
- Meetings with ELT, head of student recruitment and admissions, admissions and customer experience manager, admissions campus execs and MIS (college information services).
- Feedback from staff involved in the process.

- Sampling of interview records for equality aspects, particularly refusals of a place.
- Setting and monitoring of service standards and targets times for each stage of the process.
- Student feedback.

17. RELATED COLLEGE DOCUMENTS

- Mission statement.
- EDI policy.
- Fees Policy.
- Guidance Policy.
- Safeguarding Policy and procedure
- Learning Support Policy.
- Data Protection Policy.

17. ASSOCIATED PROCEDURES

- Full-time and substantial part-time course applicants.
- 14-16 Apprenticeship Academy.
- 14-16 Skills Development Programme.
- SEND Foundation Studies.
- Flexible starts.
- Apprentices.
- Sub-contracted and full-cost courses.
- Higher Education/UCAS.
- Job Centre plus.
- Part-time and community courses (register of interest/applicant).
- ESOL.
- Complaints procedure.

Appendix 1.0

Luminate Education Group has entered into a formal agreement with the White Rose Academies Trust (WRAT) schools to ensure all WRAT potential students are offered the opportunity to apply, interview and where suitable, conditionally offered a place on a course within the college. If not suitable for a specific course, alternatives are advised to the potential student.