



# Higher Education Admissions Policy and Procedure

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## **Introduction**

Fareham College is committed to delivering a responsive curriculum that provides opportunities for all and supports the development of the local workforce and the local economy. Our Higher Education courses range from Level 4 to Level 7 and we aim to offer students a programme which best meets their learning needs and aspirations.

## **QAA Quality Code**

This document seeks to meet the following requirements of the Quality Code:

### **B2 Expectation**

The Quality Code sets out the following expectation about recruitment, selection and admission to higher education, which higher education providers are required to meet:

Recruitment, selection, and admission policies and procedures adhere to the principles of fair admission. They are transparent, reliable, valid, inclusive and underpinned by appropriate organisational structures and processes. They support higher education providers in the selection of students who are able to complete their programme.

In keeping with QAA guidance for colleges delivering Higher Education, we recognise that this expectation is underpinned by the 'principles of fair admissions' set out by the Schwartz Report which states that a fair admissions system should:

- be transparent
- enable higher education providers to select students who are able to complete the programme as judged by their achievements and their potential
- strive to use assessment methods that are reliable and valid
- seek to minimise barriers for applicants
- be professional in every respect and underpinned by appropriate organisational structures and processes.

This policy aims to achieve the principle indicators as outlined in annex A

## **Entry Requirements**

All of the Higher Education programmes have minimum entry requirements which are published in the Fareham College Part-time or Full-Time Prospectus, Fareham College website. These requirements must be met and will be discussed with the applicant at interview. Students may require screening during induction to assess their levels of Maths and English.

## **Competition and Markets Authority Compliance**

Following the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) review of consumer law compliance in the Higher Education undergraduate sector, Fareham College has fully co-operated and voluntarily engaged with the CMA and agreed the following undertaking with the CMA pursuant to section 219 of the EA02:

- appropriate consultation with students affected by potential changes to course
- immediate notification of any decisions to change course and advice regarding their rights to withdraw with appropriate refunds, where applicable
- offer of a suitable replacement course/programme

The college reserves the right to change course content and delivery model as required but will ensure that the potential and existing students are consulted and offered further information, advice and guidance as required.

### **Confirmation of a Place**

Once an application has been received by the College, a Careers Centre Advisor will make contact with the applicant to arrange an interview. At interview the student will be guided through the entry requirements and the content of the course. If the entry requirements are met, a formal offer will be made and the student will be informed of the induction process. Students who are awaiting results will be made a conditional offer pending final confirmation via college processes.

If a student declares that they have criminal convictions, the application will be referred to Student Services before a formal offer is made. Students who have declared a learning disability will be referred to Learning Support to ensure that an appropriate support package is arranged.

### **All applicants must:**

- Satisfy requirements for admission to the proposed programme;
- Provide evidence of previous achievements including original certificates or exam board notifications;
- Undertake further assessment or provide information as necessary to allow the College to support any identified additional learning needs;
- Agree in writing to adhere to the Rules of the College, as set out in the Students' Code of Conduct and to any agreements between the College and individual students that the College may reasonably require.

### **Employer Involvement**

Where an employer is involved in recommending and/or financially supporting students for a course, the College will still need to ensure entry requirements are met and that initial advice and guidance demonstrates that the course is suitable; the College's decision will be final. While in the majority of cases the College will provide a suitable learning programme, initial advice and guidance may suggest alternative courses or the need for further preparation before undertaking the course applied for.

### **Induction**

Students will be invited to a Higher Education Induction prior to starting their course. Students will meet with their Course Leader and will be provided with a Student ID Card, Higher Education Lanyard, Student Handbook and a Course Timetable.

Students will undertake an iLRC Induction which will enable them to access research and learning resources including the Virtual Learning Environment, Oracle. Student Services will also be available to provide IAG on Finance, Enrolments and Student Support.

Returning Higher Education students will also be invited to attend the Higher Education Induction.

### **Fees**

Financial information is published on the Fareham College website. Information including tuition, examination fees and additional course costs are included and will be discussed at interview. Students may be referred to the Student Finance Coordinator for support with Student Loans and other financial concerns.

Further information on fees, can be found in the Colleges Fee Policy

## **Equal Opportunities**

The College will always operate within the terms of current legislation for Equality and Diversity. In cases where applicants have additional needs or special requirements, the College will discuss these with the student at an early stage in the application process so that all necessary arrangements can be put in place to meet the needs of the student by the start of the academic year.

## **Safeguarding**

The College takes its responsibilities for Safeguarding extremely seriously. All students attending the College are asked to declare any criminal convictions that they may have or are pending. Criminal convictions are not necessarily a barrier to entry for study at the College. However, a student risk assessment will be carried out and the College reserves the right to contact agencies such as the Independent Safeguarding Authority, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and the Police and Probation Teams if they feel this is necessary. For some courses of study it is a requirement that students are registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority before they are able to go out on placement. Where this is appropriate, students will be notified in advance.

## **Policy for Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation**

Part 5 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on colleges to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'.

Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation is one element within our overall College arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students in line with our statutory duties. This policy also draws upon the Government's 'Prevent' agenda and associated briefing sheet, 'Prevent violent extremism'; and the DfE Guidance, 'Keeping Learners Safe in Education, 2018'.

## **Reasons why a student may not be offered a place on their preferred programme of study**

The College aims to provide all applicants with a programme which suits their individual needs. A student may not be admitted to a programme if:

- They are unable to demonstrate that they hold the minimum entry requirements;
- They are seeking to undertake a programme which is not in their best educational interest;
- They are considered unfit to study (see Fitness to Study Policy);
- They have a criminal conviction which presents a risk to other students or that bars them from certain areas of work and they wish to follow a programme which would normally lead to that type of work;
- They have behaved inappropriately whilst on College premises or a reference indicates they have displayed poor behaviour or attitude in a previous education provider;
- There are other circumstances which question their suitability for a course;
- References from other education providers or employers indicate they are unsuitable for a course;
- They have been excluded from a previous education provider;
- The College deems the adjustments needed to the estate or study programme as unreasonable as per the Equality Act 2010.
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If the College is unable to accept a student on their chosen programme, they will offer appropriate advice and guidance to enable the student to make other choices. A student will only be refused admission to the College if it proves to be impossible to provide alternative, appropriate study for them. Any refusal to admit can only be agreed by the Assistant Principal: Students and Improvement who has overall responsibility for student admissions.

## **Minimising Barriers for Applicants**

We welcome applications from students requiring additional support of any kind on their chosen course. Applicants are encouraged to discuss any support need at the initial interview stage and throughout the enrolment, screening and induction process, and a further interview with the Learning Support Manager or appropriate referrals will be offered.

## **International Students**

Fareham College is able to sponsor a limited number of students under its Tier 4 License. International applicants must contact the College before making any form of application.

Where students have not been resident in the EEA for the 3 years immediately prior to starting their course, they may not be eligible for public funding. As such they would be liable for fees at a *full-cost* rate. This includes British citizens who have not been resident in the EEA in the three years prior to application.

## **Overseas qualifications**

For students with overseas qualifications, they will need to supply a qualification equivalence comparison from UK NARIC (<http://ecctis.co.uk/naric/>), in order to ascertain whether they meet the entry requirements for their desired course. Fareham College is unable to pay for this service.

## **Entry requirements and Application Process**

All applicants are expected to provide original certificates or exam board notifications before confirmation of their programme.

Published entry requirements and application processes are outlined in the table below and are available on the College website. If the applicant has alternative qualifications this will be reviewed by the Course Leader. The College informs prospective students at interview of the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy.

The College also welcomes applications from those who have significant work or life experience and who may not necessarily meet the published academic requirements for their chosen course. Applicants will be required to demonstrate evidence of motivation, potential, knowledge and ability to study the course of their choice, and the College must be satisfied that an applicant's work or life experience is equivalent to the qualifications that other applicants will be studying. In these cases, students will still have to sit the entrance tests.

Entry requirements are reviewed on an annual basis and are updated if necessary. They are also subject to changes in Government policy. Please see the Fareham College website for up to date course information, including entry criteria.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Careers Centre in conjunction with the Assistant Principal: Students and Improvement are responsible for ensuring that all candidates receive a fair and transparent service and that all academic staff involved in the interview process are trained to comply with the present policy. Where stated entry requirements are not met, but an alternative case is made, Careers Centre staff will advise academic staff who will be responsible for the final decision.

## **Exceptional Circumstance- Admissions**

These would include requests for consideration relating to:

- long-term illness or the death of a close relative that adversely affected the student's study and have been confirmed by the personal tutor or external reference;
- outstanding occupational/technical skills/talent.

This decision to accept the student must be approved by the relevant Director.

## **Changes to Programmes**

Students will be notified of any intended changes or cancellation of their study programme prior to starting the course. Careers Centre Advisors will discuss any changes at the earliest opportunity and advise accordingly.

If courses are cancelled a course refund of fees, would be given as outlined in the Colleges Fee Policy

Students wishing to withdraw from their programme must inform their Course Leader or a member of Student Services.

## **Progression Requirements**

Examination and progression boards will take place at the end of the academic year to confirm achievement, agree progression where relevant and consider exceptional circumstances.

## **Admission Appeals and Complaints**

### **Admission Appeals**

Whilst the college aims to be fully inclusive and offers a range of programmes to suit individuals' aspirations, ambitions, needs and previous experiences there may be occasions where an admission application is declined.

- Applications may be declined as set out in this policy.
- Where applicants are refused a place at the College, they have the right to appeal against the decision.
- An application declined decision will be made in writing from the Assistant Principal Students and Improvement.
- On receipt of this letter an applicant has 5 working day in which to appeal the decision.
- Appeals must be made in writing to the Deputy Principal.
- The letter of appeal must set out reasons for appeal.
- On receipt of the letter of appeal from the applicant the Deputy Principal, or their nominee, will respond within 5 working days to invite the applicant to an appeals panel consisting of the Deputy Principal, the Assistant Principal Students and Improvement.
- An Appeals Panel will be convened within 5 workings, if practicable, of the Deputy Principals response to the Letter of Appeal.
- Appellants over the age of 18 may be accompanied by a parent, guardian or other adult

representative.

- On hearing the appeal, the Deputy Principal will make a final decision within 5 working days and respond in writing with the decision.
- The Deputy Principal's decision is final and no further right of appeal is available.

If the College Complaints Procedure does not resolve the complaint, students may have recourse to the complaints procedures of the awarding body, partner institution where relevant or the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.