

Recruitment, Selection and Admission

Policy and Procedures for Higher Education Courses

1. Purpose and scope of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out Sandwell College's commitment to fair and inclusive recruitment, selection and admission of students to higher education (HE) courses at the College including those delivered in collaboration with partner universities and irrespective of whether the course is full time or part time.

In drafting and delivering this policy the College has reviewed and integrated the guiding principles of the Schwartz report 2004 whose guiding principles state that HE providers should:

- be transparent, and provide consistent and efficient information;
- select students who are able to complete the course as judged by their achievements and potential;
- use assessment methods that are reliable and valid;
- minimise barriers to applicants; and
- be professional in every respect and underpinned by institutional structures and processes.¹

Furthermore, the College has incorporated the advice of the University and College Admission Service (UCAS), the guidance of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and has ensured compliance with all relevant legislation including the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Consumer Rights Act 2015
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

2. Recruitment

The term 'recruitment' generally refers to the activities and initiatives undertaken by the College with the goal of encouraging prospective students to apply for admission to a course within the College.

¹ <https://www.ucas.com/file/233141/download?token=HvNZanrL>

Information given at recruitment events will be accurate, transparent and reliable. Marketing materials will be quality checked by the Head of Department responsible for the curriculum and by the Head of Higher Education prior to publication. All staff giving advice about courses will be properly trained to do so and will be equipped with the most up to date information at all times.

Staff giving advice regarding HE courses will receive training and regular updating. Staff training is the responsibility of the head of curriculum supported by the careers department lead.

Any changes to HE courses must be agreed by the Executive Director responsible for HE.

- i) All changes to course information must be disseminated to all staff responsible for giving advice regarding the course as soon as the change is agreed. The responsibility for ensuring that all staff are aware of changes to courses belongs to the Head of Curriculum. This should be via email and also confirmed verbally to ensure understanding.
- ii) All changes to course information must be updated on the College's online systems as well as all 3rd party online systems which the College can control including UCAS where relevant. The Head of Curriculum must inform the marketing department and admissions department immediately once the change is agreed. The marketing team must ensure that the College's online systems are updated within 2 working days and the admissions team must notify any 3rd parties of the change within 2 working days. It is the responsibility of the Head of Marketing to ensure that the College's online systems are updated accurately and within the time period given. It is the responsibility of the Head of Admissions to ensure that 3rd parties amend the course information accurately on their online systems within a reasonable timescale.

Recruitment events held within the College and at external venues must be fully inclusive and accessible for prospective students and their supporters. A range of events should be held during the year including evenings and Saturdays to cater for prospective students with employment, educational and family commitments. All events should be easily physically accessible for students with reduced mobility or sensory impairments.

Recruitment information should be available both verbally and visually and all reasonable requests for materials in different formats should be catered for.

Students may make enquiries for further information via the College website, by telephoning the College, by visiting the College in person or at a recruitment event. The College will endeavour to respond to their queries within 2 working days.

Students who apply to the College will be asked to give their feedback on the usefulness of the recruitment process in the initial communication sent to them

following their application. Feedback will be reported to the HE Quality Group annually and policies and procedures will be reviewed in light of this.

The College does not currently allow the use of recruitment agencies to recruit students.

Students who are recruited by the University of Wolverhampton should contact the University for details of their policies and procedures with regards to recruitment.

3. Selection and Admission

Admission to courses which are delivered via a partner university will follow the admission policy of that university.

Upon receiving an application, the College will acknowledge receipt of this application within 3 working days.

The College will only admit a student where they have a reasonable expectation of that student completing the course. The College will ensure that the selection process is fair yet robust enough to determine suitability for the level and subject of study.

The entry criteria for each course are set out in the course's definitive programme record. The selection process may also involve a portfolio or audition depending upon the subject area, these alternative methods of selection will be reviewed by subject specialists.

Students with qualifications from outside of the English education system will be considered with a valid NARIC-UK certificate.

Employment experience may be considered in lieu of formal qualifications depending upon the subject and level of study. We also recognise the value of prior learning and the importance of making that learning count. If an applicant has previously studied elsewhere or gained expertise in a professional role through experiential learning in the workplace, it could count towards another qualification and help to accelerate studies. When considering this 'recognition of prior learning' - the policies of the awarding body will be taken into account.

Decisions of admission will be consistently applied to ensure transparency and fairness.

The selection process shall only include relevant selection criteria to that subject and level of study.

All students who meet the basic entry requirements will have an interview with a subject specialist to determine suitability for the course. Within 14 days of receiving an application the College will take one of 2 actions:

- a. Send an invitation for interview; or
- b. Send a notification that the basic entry requirements are not met.

Where a student is invited for interview they will be asked to contact the College if they have any specific requirements for access ahead of the interview. All reasonable requirements will be catered for where due notice is given.

Interviews can take place at any time between 9am and 9pm and can be arranged to suit an applicant, if required.

During the interview process advice and guidance will be given to students to ensure that they are suitable for the course and that the course is suitable for their needs and aspirations.

Where an application is unsuccessful at any stage of the process advice and guidance will be given to the applicant on alternatives either within the College or externally.

The effectiveness and appropriateness of the recruitment, selection and admissions policy will be reviewed:

- Annually via the admissions data;
- Termly via the recruitment data;
- Continuously in response to complaints and/or appeals; and
- Annually via the feedback received from applicants.

The policy will be managed by the Head of Higher Education and approved by the Executive Director of Quality.

This policy will be reviewed by the College's Equality and Diversity Board ahead of any significant alteration.

4. Complaints

If an applicant is dissatisfied with any aspect of their application to the College they should raise their concerns with the Admissions Team, in the first instance. If they remain dissatisfied, a formal complaint may be lodged using the College's HE complaints process - details of which can be found on the College website: <https://www.sandwell.ac.uk/higher-education/>

5. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

In accordance with GDPR any personal data shall be;

- processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to individuals;
- collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes;
- adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purpose for which they are processed;
- accurate and where necessary, kept up to date, every reasonable step taken to ensure that personal data that are inaccurate, having regard to

the purpose for which they are processed, are erased or rectified without delay;

- processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage using appropriate technical or organisational measures;
- shared with relevant regulatory bodies, such as the Data Agency and the Higher Education Statistics Agency, where relevant, for external quality assurance activity.

Individuals have a right to be informed about the collection and use of their personal data. See full General Data Protection Regulation:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/principles/>