

Reference Number: P54

# ADMISSIONS POLICY



Policy Review					
Author	Position	Approved by Corporation	Approval date	Review Cycle	Review Date
Susie Peart	Quality Manager	Signed: 	6 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	Annually	June 2024

## Document Control – Revision History

Author	Summary of Changes	Date	Version	Date last reviewed by SED	Recommended to SED Y/N
Nikki Sendell /Mark Bolton	New Policy	25.01.18		-	Yes
Mark Bolton	Updated wording.	28.03.19		14.03.18	
Sian Deasy & Susie Peart	Integrated HE Admissions regs	04.08.20		14.03.18	Yes?
Sian Deasy	Formatting changes, including alignment, line spacing, and numbering in line with Accessibility good practice. More specificity around HE admissions practices and reasonable adjustments to the admissions process.		v1		

## Initial Equality Impact Screening

### Who has been consulted on this policy & procedure?

A range of internal staff, including the Safeguarding Group, as well as colleagues from the Open University as part of the 2023 Institutional Approval event.

### What evidence has been used for this impact screening (e.g. related policies, publications)?

Review for gendered pronouns. Amended in line with Accessibility good practice.

### Declaration (please tick one statement and indicate any negative impacts)

- We are satisfied that an initial screening has been carried out on this policy/procedure and a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required. There are no specific negative impacts on any of the Protected Characteristics groups.
- We recommend that an Equality Impact Assessment is required by the Equality and Diversity group, as possible negative impacts have been identified for one or more of the Protected Characteristics groups as follows:
- Age
  - Disability
  - Gender Reassignment
  - Race
  - Religion or belief
  - Sex
  - Sexual orientation
  - Marriage & civil partnership
  - Pregnancy & maternity

**Completed by Author: S Peart**    **Position:** Quality Manager    **Date:** 14.06.23

Reviewed by Equality & Diversity Group    **Date:**

We confirm that any recommended amendments have been made

Amended by Author:    Position:    Date:

**Summary of Comments/Recommendations from Equality & Diversity Group Review:**

Throughout this policy, unless otherwise explicitly stated, “full time” and “part time” applications refer to any application to the College except those to Yeovil College University Centre (YCUC) Higher Education (HE) programmes.

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### **1. SCOPE**

1.1 The Admissions process for all learners on part time, full time and HE courses comprises a number of the following processes:

1.1.1 Initial contact

1.1.2 Application

1.1.3 Interview

1.1.4 Enrolment

1.2 At enrolment, a learner will become part of the college student body.

## **2. RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY**

- 2.1 Responsibility for the Admissions Policy sits with the Senior Management Team (SMT). Responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the principles set out in this policy sits between Curriculum teams, the iZone, Management Information Services (MIS), in the case of Yeovil College University Centre programmes the University Centre team, and in the case of apprentices the Employer Engagement team.

## **3. PRINCIPLES OF THE POLICY**

### **3.1 High Quality Customer Service**

- 3.1.1 Yeovil College is committed to ensuring all customer interaction with the College provides a consistently high customer service experience. The policies and processes will put at their heart the customer experience, providing context for the development of seamless and well managed Admissions processes.

### **3.2 Widening Participation**

- 3.2.1 Yeovil College is committed to increasing and widening participation in education and training. Applications for college courses are actively encouraged from all interested individuals in the local community and beyond.

### **3.3 Advice and Guidance**

- 3.3.1 Yeovil College is committed to providing impartial advice and guidance in the admissions process to assist applicants in choosing the course or programme of study which is right for them. The College is committed to ensuring the right student for the right course at the right time.

### **3.4 Confidentiality**

- 3.4.1 Yeovil College is committed to ensuring confidentiality during the admissions process to comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1988 and GDPR. Confidentiality of the process is also closely linked to the College's policy on Safeguarding of students and staff.

### 3.5 Equality of Opportunity

- 3.5.1 In line with the provisions of the Equality Act (2010), the College is committed to ensuring that the admissions process is open and transparent, and that no individual or group receives less favourable treatment due to age, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, plus economic status.
- 3.5.2 The College is committed to ensuring that any individual with learning difficulties or disabilities is treated fairly. All reasonable practicable adjustments to provision will be made to enable any individual with a learning difficulty or disability access to education. The College actively works to extend the diversity of its student population through the development of an inclusive learning environment.
- 3.5.3 In the context of the admissions process, reasonable adjustments might include, but are not limited to, an applicant requesting that an on-site interview takes place in a space that meets their physical accessibility needs, the presence of a communication support worker or sign language interpreter at an interview, or a large-print or alternative format of the application form being made available.

### 3.6 Quality

- 3.6.1 The College works to the Gatsby 8 standards framework for quality information, advice and guidance to all students. Compliance with the admissions policy is monitored through learner feedback and through other internal audit systems. An annual training schedule is in place for the iZone team who are responsible for managing the admissions process for full and part-time (non YCUC) students.

### 3.7 Entry Requirements

- 3.7.1 Yeovil College welcomes applications from all sectors of the community. Prospective students are selected not only by their formal qualifications, but also their experience, motivation, and interest in the course and subject area.
- 3.7.2 The entry requirements published in the prospectus annually are standardised and used as a guide to a learner's suitability to study a course.

- 3.7.3 Adults returning to education are welcome to apply to most College courses. The College may consider previous experience and training as an alternative to formal qualifications.
- 3.7.4 Where an applicant already holds relevant qualifications or other evidence of learning which they believe may qualify them for advanced entry to a later stage of a particular programme via a process of 'Accreditation of Prior Learning' (APL) or 'Recognition of Prior Learning' (RPL), they should refer to the College's 'Assessment and APL-RPL Procedure'<sup>1</sup> for more information, and should inform the College as early as possible during the application process, as both APL and RPL can be time-consuming processes, and would need to be undertaken and concluded before an offer of a place could be made.
- 3.7.5 For international students, their overseas qualifications should be equivalent to the UK requirements. In addition, Yeovil College is a sponsoring organisation linked to the UK Border Agency and all international students will have to satisfy the requirements of the UK Government for studying in the UK as well as meeting the entry requirements of the College in terms of qualifications and/or experience.
- 3.7.6 Entry requirements for Yeovil College University Centre courses are set and reviewed in discussion with the relevant awarding body or Partner University. Curriculum Areas are responsible for the verification and publication of accurate entry criteria for HE programmes. For applicants whose first language is not English, entry requirements are likely to also include meeting an English language requirement. Mature applicants are considered to be those who will be aged 21 or over at the start of their course. In line with our institutional commitment to Widening Participation, applications from mature students may be considered based on prior experience including previous study and work experience, rather than the standard entry requirements. Where appropriate, this experience will be independently evaluated in line with the College's procedures for Recognition of Prior Learning. The College's procedures for Recognition of Prior Learning, as well as any corresponding procedures from the relevant awarding organisation, will apply to any student wishing to apply for advanced entry on the basis of prior experience.
- 3.7.7 Entry requirements will be detailed on the course information provided on the website.

- 3.7.8 Applicants receive an offer in writing which is either conditional on pending examination results, or unconditional.

## **4. ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES**

### **4.1 Full Time Courses**

- 4.1.1 The College has the following admissions procedures for full time (non-YCUC) courses to ensure that applicants are matched to the most appropriate courses.

- 4.1.2 The programme offer will be based on the outcome of the following activities and information:

- 4.1.2.1 Open Event attendance

- 4.1.2.2 Interview and Assessment (which may include attendance at a 'twilight' evening event)

- 4.1.2.3 Previous Qualifications/experience

- 4.1.2.4 References (where appropriate)

- 4.1.3 Initial Assessment indicating levels of literacy and numeracy will take place at the start of the course and may be used to determine the most appropriate programme under our guiding principle of 'right student, right course' to achieve the best outcome.

- 4.1.4 Where applicants receive an offer conditional upon obtaining a specific level of qualification, and fail to meet that level, the application may be considered on an individual basis but a place may be offered, at the discretion of the Curriculum Area Manager for the relevant area, on an appropriate level of study.

- 4.1.5 If the College is unable to offer a place on the applicant's chosen course, the College will endeavour to offer a suitable alternative or work with external agencies/other providers to source a suitable place.

### **4.2 Part Time/Night School Courses**

- 4.2.1 Some part time courses do not require an interview or assessment and applicants can apply in person, through an on-line application form, or by telephone,

- 4.2.2 Some courses have specific entry requirements and these, together with the methods of enrolment, are published in the part time guide and on the College website.
- 4.2.3 If applicants are unsure about which course to study, or progression routes, they can access impartial information and advice from the Careers, Work Placement and Employer Engagement Team, or the iZone Team. As well as individual discussions via email or telephone with any curriculum area to gain more information to inform their decision.

#### 4.3 Yeovil College University Centre (YCUC) Courses

- 4.3.1 In line with the 'right student, right course, right time' principle, the admissions process for YCUC focuses on recruiting students who are capable of meeting the required standards for their course, whatever their background. Admissions and recruitment practices are underpinned by the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code.
- 4.3.2 All applications for full-time courses should be made through UCAS<sup>2</sup>. Part-time applications should be made directly to the University Centre ([university\\_centre@yeovil.ac.uk](mailto:university_centre@yeovil.ac.uk)). Prospective students can find more information about the application process in the 'How To Apply' part of our website<sup>3</sup> as well as in the 'FAQs' section of the 'About Us' page.
- 4.3.3 Once applications have been received, applicants who already meet the entry criteria, who are undertaking qualifications which would satisfy the entry criteria, and mature applicants who can demonstrate appropriate alternative experience will be invited to an admissions interview. This interview will normally be conducted by a member of the programme team and is designed to assess a student's suitability and potential to succeed on the course in question. In some instances, students may be asked to complete an assessment to help determine their suitability for study at Level 4 or above.
- 4.3.4 If an applicant has demonstrated that they meet required published entry criteria and have the appropriate knowledge and skills to have the potential to complete their chosen programme of study successfully, they may be made a 'conditional' or

'unconditional' offer. A 'conditional' offer means the offer of a place is dependent upon a student satisfying certain criteria before the start of the course. An 'unconditional' offer means the student already meets the entry requirements for their course.

- 4.3.5 All prospective learners are required to disclose any previous or pending convictions/cautions. If a disclosure is made, a separate form and interview will be conducted where appropriate. As a college we work with learners from all backgrounds and supportive agencies as an inclusive educational establishment. However, we reserve the right to not offer a place at that time in certain circumstances.
- 4.3.6 After an offer is made, it is the responsibility of the student to accept the offer in a specified manner and in line with any stipulated time frames - usually via UCAS Track for full-time applicants or a reply slip to the College for part-time. In the summer 'Clearing' period, timeframes for students to respond to offers are likely to be shorter than the rest of the admissions cycle.
- 4.3.7 Applications and offers are monitored by a range of Widening Participation factors including gender, ethnicity, and postcode.

## **5. RECRUITMENT PROCESS (NON-YCUC STUDENTS)**

### **5.1 Careers Information, Advice and Guidance**

- 5.1.1 The iZone Team responds to all initial enquiries regarding the College's programme offer. If applicants are unsure about which course to study or progression routes, they can access the wider college Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) Team and the Apprenticeship team as well as individual appointments with any curriculum area and/or student support team to gain more information to guide their decision.
- 5.1.2 The College welcomes applications from students with additional needs. Full-time applicants who indicate that they have learning difficulties/disabilities are interviewed by a specialist from the learning support team to discuss needs and agree the support required.
- 5.1.3 All prospective learners are required to disclose any previous or pending convictions/cautions. If a disclosure is made, a separate form and interview will be

conducted where appropriate. As a college we work with learners from all backgrounds and supportive agencies as an inclusive educational establishment. However, we reserve the right to not offer a place at that time in certain circumstances.

## 5.2 Interview Process

- 5.2.1 Applicants for programmes which require an interview prior to an offer of a place being made (including, but not limited to, full-time post-16 courses and YCUC programmes) will be invited to an interview. This may take place on-site, or may take place over the phone, dependent upon the nature of the programme. Students will be notified of their interview date and time in advance and will have the option to request an alternative date or time if the initially suggested appointment is not appropriate. Applicants who require any reasonable adjustments to be made in order to access their interview should notify the College to request this as soon as reasonably possible after receiving their invitation to interview.
- 5.2.2 The College's interview team provide information on all full-time courses. The interviewer will explain the range of post 16 options available to match the applicant's interests and career aspirations including study programmes, apprenticeships, and employment with training. The interview is an opportunity for applicants to discuss their aspirations before making a decision and being offered appropriate advice and progression options.
- 5.2.3 The following is discussed during the interview or assessment process:
- 5.2.3.1 Programme Information, including information about programme details, tutorials, assessment, work placements and materials, course trips, enrichment options progression routes and career opportunities
  - 5.2.3.2 Fees and Funding information (if applicable)
  - 5.2.3.3 Student Services including information about transport routes and available bursaries (if applicable)
  - 5.2.3.4 Appropriate student support (if applicable)
- 5.2.4 All applicants to full time programmes are given the opportunity to attend Experience Days as part of the IAG process to support a successful student/programme.

5.2.5 If a student is offered a place at College following interview, they will be asked to confirm their acceptance.

### 5.3 Keep Warm Campaign

5.3.1 Between the application/interview and the enrolment date, all applicants are communicated with regularly by the College through its Keep Warm Campaign. Applicants are encouraged to register on the college social media sites and are sent a variety of different communications including postcards, e-cards and letters leading up to enrolment. All applicants for full time courses and Apprenticeships are invited to a New Students Day in June.

5.3.2 Part time applicants and current students are also sent keep warm communications leading up to the launch of any new part time course start dates.

## 6. ENROLMENT

6.1 All full time and part time applicants are required to enrol in person. Learning agreements for these students will be produced and signed at enrolment and all student personal and confidential information will be checked, including a Unique Learner Number (ULN). ID cards will also be processed at this time and available during induction.

6.2 Part time (non-YCUC) students enrol in person, on the second week of their course. ID cards are issued, and payment is then taken (if applicable).

6.3 Yeovil College University Centre students must enrol on their first day of study, before any formal teaching on their course commences.

### 6.4 Late Enrolment

6.4.1 Late applicants/enrolments for full time (non YCUC) courses will be referred from the iZone Team to the relevant Curriculum Area Manager, who will manage that application with support from the iZone Team on a 1-1 basis.

6.4.2 Late applicants/enrolments may be highlighted as learners who are at risk of early withdrawal, to ensure that extra support is provided.

6.4.3 For courses starting in the Autumn term, Yeovil College University Centre guarantee equal consideration to all those who apply before the UCAS 'Equal Consideration Deadline'<sup>4</sup> which is usually in mid-January. Where there is space available, YCUC will continue to consider applicants beyond this date, and may consider late applications up until the second week of term. However, late enrolment is not always possible, including in situations where cohorts are full, or the entry requirements for the programme cannot be satisfied in time, such as obtaining a DBS check for certain courses. For courses that start at a different point, for example those that begin in January, timescales for application will be appropriately publicised.

## **7. LEARNERS AGED UNDER 16**

7.1 Part-time applicants who are under 16 can access specific provision at the College. These applicants are referred to the Curriculum area which will ensure that, along with the Head of Student Data, Funding & Customer Services, funding is available to support learning before an interview can be arranged. Admission is normally subject to funding.

## **8. SPECIFIC ADMISSION PROCEDURES**

### **8.1 Unspent or Pending Criminal Convictions**

8.1.1 Where an applicant has a criminal conviction, the College will refer all applicants to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a nominated deputy for consideration. This involves the applicant completing a declaration form to outline details of the conviction, which then allows a risk assessment process to take place, which is designed to safeguard the welfare of all students and staff at the College whilst leaving scope for those with criminal convictions to seek admission to a college course.

8.1.2 The outcome of this risk assessment process will be communicated to an applicant clearly and in writing. It can take a period of up to four weeks for the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy to undertake the risk assessment process to identify whether it is appropriate and possible for an application to a student's chosen course to proceed. In some exceptional circumstances, for example, where the College needs to seek further information from a professional, statutory, or

regulatory body as part of the risk assessment process, it may take longer than four weeks to undertake the assessment process, however, the reasons for any delay and an alternative timescale would be communicated clearly to the applicant.

8.1.3 The College reserves the right to refuse admission to applicants who, as a result of the risk assessment process, are viewed as unsuitable.

## 8.2 Conditional Entry

8.2.1 Applicants who have a history of disrupted education, exclusion or behavioural problems may be offered a place subject to probationary conditions, which will be outlined to the applicant by way of a Student Contract at the time of the offer. A decision to admit an applicant under these circumstances will be at the discretion of the relevant Curriculum Area Manager.

## 8.3 Admission of Students previously excluded from Yeovil College

8.3.1 Students who have been previously excluded from the College must have evidence that they have addressed the issues leading to their exclusion and may be admitted subject to probationary conditions, which will be outlined to the applicant by way of a Student Contract at the time of the offer. A decision to admit an applicant under these circumstances will be at the discretion of the relevant Curriculum Area Manager and must be authorised by the Vice Principal Quality of Education

## 8.4 Admission of Students with Unsatisfactory References

8.4.1 The College reserves the right to request references and/or school reports for all applicants. Unsatisfactory references will be reviewed by the relevant Curriculum Area Manager. A decision to admit an applicant under these circumstances will be at the discretion of the relevant Curriculum Area Manager. Applicants who have been previously excluded from any other educational institution may be required to attend an additional interview to allow the College to access any additional needs and further references may be required.

8.5 Admissions of Students who have previously enrolled, but have withdrawn early from, or not completed their course/qualification.

8.5.1 The College reserves the right not to admit an applicant who previously attended the College but failed to make sufficient effort towards successfully completing their studies.

## 8.6 Cancellation of a Course by Yeovil College

8.6.1 Where insufficient numbers have applied for a course, it may be necessary for the College to close or cancel courses. The College will endeavour to inform applicants as soon as they are aware that a course is full or cancelled. In most cases fees are not taken from applicants before the start of a course, but on any occasion where fees have been taken prior to the start of a course which is then cancelled by the College, any fees paid may be refunded, depending on the impact of the cancelling student on the viability of the programme.

8.6.2 For YCUC programmes, the provisions of Section 8 (Cancellation of Offer and Refund Policy) of the Higher Education Student Terms and Conditions would be followed in any instance of course cancellation. As appropriate, the provisions of the Student Protection Plan would also be followed.

## 8.7 Changes to course descriptions and/or fees

8.7.1 The College will make every effort to ensure that course fees and descriptions are correct at the time of publishing, however, sometimes often due to Government policy/funding changes, it may be necessary for amendments to be made to course descriptions and associated costs during the year.

8.7.2 For YCUC programmes, the provisions of Section 6 (Provision of Advertised Programmes and Services) of the Higher Education Student Terms and Conditions would be followed in any instance where amendments to courses were made during the year.

## 8.8 Cancellation of a Course by a Student

8.8.1 When cancelling a confirmed booking on a course by a student, any fees paid **prior** to the commencement of the course will be refunded.

8.8.2 Cancellations by a student made after the second week of attendance and after fees have been paid, will not be eligible for a refund.

8.8.3 Cancellations made by a Yeovil College University Centre student will be considered in line with the Higher Education Fees Policy and the Higher Education Student Terms and Conditions.

## 8.9 Safeguarding Staff and Students

8.9.1 The College has a duty of care to students and staff and thus reserves the right to refuse admission to an applicant where there is evidence that they could be a threat or danger to others.

## 8.10 Applications from Debtors

8.10.1 The College reserves the right to refuse admission to an applicant who has outstanding debts to the College.

8.10.2 In addition, we reserve the right to withhold exam certification if there are tuition fees owing on a course.

8.11 Yeovil College will make an offer to a learner and enrol based upon all the information available at the time of interview/enrolment. If, at a later point, additional information is disclosed or discovered, Yeovil College reserves the right to alter or review/withdraw the offer in light of the additional information. Examples of this might include, but are not limited to, if it is discovered that a student has falsified any element of their application (including, but not limited to, references or previous qualifications), if a student subsequently receives a criminal conviction and under the provisions of section 8.1 it is no longer possible for them to study at the college, or if a student subsequently enrolls on a different programme of study which means they are no longer eligible, under funding regulations or other rules, to undertake the programme of study for which they had been offered a place.

## 9. ADMISSIONS PROCESS APPEALS

9.1 In the event of an applicant being dissatisfied with the admissions process or wishing to dispute a decision not to admit them to the College, the applicant may appeal in writing, in conjunction with the College's Complaints Procedures.

## **10. DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

10.1 All students' personal data is held securely. Information can be shared with the applicant's consent, in conjunction with the College's policies on Data Protection and Confidentiality.

## **11. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES<sup>5</sup>, DOCUMENTS, DEFINITIONS**

This policy cross references the following documents:

- Customer Feedback Policy and Procedure (including Complaints)
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Health, Wellbeing and Fitness to Study Policy
- Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
- HE Student Terms and Conditions
- Pre-entry and Internal Progression Advice and Guidance Policy
- Quality Assurance Agency, UK Quality Code for HE, 'Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access'<sup>6</sup>.
- UCAS Application deadlines<sup>7</sup>
- Equality Act (2010)