

Admissions Policy

Owning Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic plan 2021-2025 	Related Strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher Level Skills Strategy Apprenticeship Strategy International Strategy Schools & Community Engagement Strategy
Relevant to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Sheffield College staff and students. External Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) providers, partners and stakeholders 	

Office Use only:

Corporate Intranet Family:	Approval Board/Committee/Group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching, Learning, Quality & Student Experience Committee Executive Owner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deputy Chief Executive & Principal 	Approval/Re-approval Date: November 2021	Implementation Date: November 2021	Next Review Date: October 2022
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Date: 13/1/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	
Originator: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 1 of 20

New Policy or Substantive Policy Review

Version	Date	Policy Development Agreed by (Executive Owner)	Policy Development Author	Draft Policy Verified by	Policy Approval	Impact Assessment (if applicable)
V1	October 2018	Learner Recruitment Strategy Group	Head of Learner Recruitment	Director of Marketing	Governing Body	

Rationale for new or substantive policy review	
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Please make explicit if change/review relates to procedures, guidelines and associated documents only

Periodic Policy Review / Change History

Version	Date of Review / Revision	Description of Change	Reviewed By	Approved By (Executive Owner)
V2	October 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On page 1 related strategies and policies have been updated On page 12 staff roles have been updated 	MH	AH
V3	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On page 5 example external organisations within section 4 – scope and limitations under scope and limitations 	MH	AS
V3	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On page 5 reference has been made to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education within the principles section. 	MH	AS
V3	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On page 5 & 6 example external organisations have been added under scope and limitations. 	MH	AS
V3	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On page 6 the Chief Executive and Principal has been added as having overall accountability. This was not included previously. 	MH	AS
V3	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On page 6 & 7 college policies have been updated and hyperlinks included, plus a section added for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process information and documents Online resources 	MH	AS
V3	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On page 8 & 9 – applicants with additional support needs has been reworded slightly to include ALS. 	MH	AS
V3	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On page 8 Admission appeals stage 1 process has been changed. HoA has replaced VP/AP in leading stage 1 meetings. On page 8 Admissions appeal meeting 2 process has been changed. Deputy CEO is now supported by member of ELT+ in leading stage 2 appeal meetings. This was previously the Commercial Director. 	MH	AS
V3	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From page 10 onwards – the following has moved from procedure in version 2 to guidelines in V3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admissions process guidelines 	MH	AS

Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 2 of 20

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Entry requirements ○ International students ○ Reasons for not offering a place 		
V3	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On page 11 new sections added for applicant entitlement and applicant responsibilities. 	MH	AS
V3	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On page 12 new section added for policy evaluation 	MH	AS
V3	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● From page 13-17 a new section added for staff responsibilities. 	MH	AS
V4	November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On Page 4 – statements amended under principles to align to core practice in HE. 	MH	AS
V4	November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On Page 5 – Transition and Progress Co-Ordinator add to detail under 14-16 applicants to reflect their key role. ● On Page 5 – OFS added to example organisations list 	MH	AS
V4	November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On Page 7 – all policies and support information updated with new links under Supporting/Related Documents. The following have been added: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Progression appeal form ● Admissions appeal form ● HE Recognition of Prior Learning Policy 	MH	AS
V4	November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On page 8 under Procedure – all process flowcharts have been updated to reflect current practice. 	MH	AS
V4	November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On Page 9 under ALS and SEND support, extra bullet and description added to the list. 	MH	AS
V4	November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● From Page 10 – under guidelines extra stage added for course acceptance into the flowchart ● New section added for each provision type termed Admissions information and Timelines ● New section added for HE students wishing to transfer from another HE institution or with Prior learning 	MH	AS

Communication

To be agreed by Executive Leadership Team

Announcement on hub	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SLT email	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
College newsletter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	All staff email	<input type="checkbox"/>
SLT meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cascade brief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
External website	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Training needed (specify who)	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.POLICY STATEMENT

The Sheffield College is an inclusive education provider serving diverse communities. The College offers a large range of courses to students of all abilities.

The College is committed to a fair and open admissions process which supports successful progression to careers. It is also committed to raising student aspirations, widening participation and promoting equal access to courses.

This policy has been developed to provide clear guidance on the colleges admissions processes for applicants within the recruitment cycle. It sets out the College's commitment and aims for the admission of students. It also describes the principles and processes that are used to ensure starting points for all students are appropriate.

2,DEFINITIONS

Admissions refers to the process of applying to study at institutions of Further (FE) and Higher Education (HE).

This policy and guidelines refers to all elements of the student admissions journey. This includes the procedure in place from initial enquires, information advice and guidance (IAG) provision, application, selection processes, course offers and enrolment.

3.PRINCIPLES

The aim of this policy is to ensure an effective, efficient, centralised and coordinated admissions process.

This policy is based upon the principle of having simple, easy to follow processes that empower staff and students to make informed choices and decisions in a structured, efficient and professional manner.

The key overarching principles which underpin admission to the College are to:

- Operate an admissions process which applies the 'student first' approach throughout and is consistent with the College's commitment to equality and diversity.
- Offer impartial advice and guidance to prospective students with careers at the heart of everything we do, including the signposting of prospective students to other appropriate opportunities.
- Ensure all prospective students are fully informed throughout the admissions journey
- Ensure all information is accurate and reliable to enable applicants to make an informed decision.
- Ensure all prospective students are considered for a place based on their individual merits.
- Ensure that national, regional and College strategic objectives are recognised and considered.

Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 4 of 20

- Raise student aspiration and promote social mobility.
- Widen participation in post 16 FE and HE.
- Ensure that prospective students are treated fairly within an open and transparent admissions process.
- Recruit students who are capable of meeting the required standards of their course.
- Ensure all staff involved in admissions are appropriately trained.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the revised UK Quality Code for HE (UKSCQA/02 March 2018).

4.SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This policy relates to all prospective students who:

- Are school leavers aged 16 or over on the 1st September of the academic year.
- Are seeking to re-enter the education system after a period away from study.
- Are applying to continue studying with the College
- Are applying to the College following study at other institutions or place of employment
- Are applying to the College to study English language courses from overseas

The College will apply the principles within this policy to all applicants including those wishing to be enrolled on the following provision:

- Full-time study programmes and A Levels
- Part-time courses (other than some short courses and recreational learning courses)
- Higher Education
- Apprenticeships
- International courses - EFL (English as a Foreign Language)

Applicants aged 14-16 are enrolled through partnership agreements with Sheffield City Council (SCC) or with each individual secondary school/academy. Processes may vary from those stated in this policy depending on the needs of the applicant. No applicant under the school leaving age can be admitted to college without prior consultation with the Inclusion team. All 14-16 school applicants are referred to the Transition and Progress Co-ordinator who will liaise with the school.

Processes may also vary from those stated in this policy for applicants enrolled through the Routes to Employment team via the Job Centre.

The College will comply with its standard agreements with all external funding agencies, regulatory bodies and partner organisations when providing and handling data.

Example organisations are listed below:

- Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
- University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)
- Student Loans Company (SLC)
- Sheffield Futures
- Local Authorities
- National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)

Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 5 of 20

- Office for Students (OFS)
- Sheffield Hallam University
- The Open University

5.RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy exists at all levels of the College specifically:

- The Chief Executive and Principal (CEP) has overall responsibility for this policy.
- The Deputy Chief Executive and Deputy Principal is the executive owner of this policy.
- The Head of Student Services and Recruitment (HoSSR) is responsible for review, development and overseeing the implementation of this policy.
- Vice Principals and Assistant Principals are responsible for ensuring students are placed on the most appropriate courses within their faculty and in line with this policy.

The responsibilities of all relevant staff and applicants in implementing this policy are set out clearly in the guidelines.

6.IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The following procedures will be implemented for the 2022 - 2023 student recruitment cycle, plus any in year starts for the 2021-2022 academic year.

All new employees who have Admissions responsibilities are made aware of the policy and guidelines during the formal employee induction process.

Updated and amended procedures are disseminated and reinforced in training sessions, team meetings and via email communications. Employees and applicants have access to this policy on the College website.

7.MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be formally reviewed annually by the HoSSR. This formal review will take into account any changes to government funding policies, market conditions, management arrangements or internal systems and procedures.

This review will be carried out in consultation with colleagues from student experience, curriculum teams and the student union.

8.SUPPORTING/RELATED DOCUMENTS

This policy works within the college's strategic plan, vision and values. This policy should be used in conjunction with other College policies and procedures. (The following list is not exhaustive)

Related Policies

- [Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Equality Scheme 2020-2023](#)

Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 6 of 20

- [Student Charter](#)
- [Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Online Safety Policy](#)
- [Criminal Convictions Procedure](#)
- [Employee Code of Conduct](#)
- [General Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Student Support Fund Policy](#)
- [Fees and Charges Policy](#)
- [CEIAG Policy](#)
- [Complaints Policy](#)
- [OFS Fee information for new entrants 2021/2022](#)
- [Access and Widening Participation Plan 2021-22 to 2024-25](#)
- [HE Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#)

Process Information and Documents

- [Full Time Application Form](#)
- [University Level Application Form](#)
- [Part Time Application Form](#)
- [International Application Form](#)
- [Student Learning Agreement 2021-22](#)
- [2021-22 Further Education Student Learning Agreement](#)
- [2021-22 University Level Student Learning Agreement](#)
- [2021-22 Apprenticeship Student Learning Agreement](#)
- [HE Terms and Conditions](#)
- [Criminal Convictions Declaration - Part A Student](#)
- [Criminal Convictions Risk Assessment - Part B Staff Use](#)
- [SEND Referral Assessment Form](#)
- [Disability Support Allowance Application Form](#)
- [Disability Support Allowance Guidance Notes](#)
- [Progression Appeal form](#)
- [Admissions Appeal form](#)

Online Resources and Systems

- The Sheffield College website (www.shefcol.ac.uk)
- The Sheffield College On Line Admissions System (<https://prospect.shefcol.ac.uk/>)
- Sheffield Area Wide Prospectus and Common Application system (www.sheffieldprogress.co.uk)
- www.ucas.com
- www.gov.uk
- www.gov.uk/government/organisations/student-loans-company
- www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/
- www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk
- www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/how-to-claim

9.PROCEDURE

Procedures for different types of courses may vary. For more detailed information per course type please refer to relevant flowcharts below.

- [Full Time Admissions and Communication Journey](#)

Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 7 of 20

- [Full Time Internal Progression Admissions and Communication Journey](#)
- [Part Time Adult Admissions and Communication Journey - Full Application](#)
- [Part Time Adult Admissions and Communication Journey - Short Application](#)
- [Higher Education Admissions and Communication Journey](#)
- [International EFL Admissions and Communication Journey](#)
- [Apprenticeship Admissions Process](#)

Admissions appeals and complaints

Where applicants are refused a place at the College (or refused a place on the course applied for), they have a right of appeal against the decision by writing to the Head of Learner Recruitment. The relevant admissions appeal form must be completed, these forms are identified in section 8 of this policy. This right must be exercised within five working days of the applicant being refused admission.

Stage 1 – Admissions Appeal meeting 1

The applicant will be invited to an appeal meeting with the relevant Head of Academy, who will be supported by the Head of Student Services and Recruitment. They will have the right to be accompanied.

The appeal meeting will normally take place within ten working days of the College’s receipt of the unsuccessful applicant’s appeal. The College will write to the individual within ten working days of the appeal meeting to confirm the College’s decision.

Stage 2 – Admissions Appeal meeting 2

If the applicant feels that they have not been treated fairly and/or does not agree with the decision made after the conclusion of stage 1, they can appeal this decision by writing to the Deputy Chief Executive and Deputy Principal (CEO). The prospective student will then be invited to a meeting with the Deputy CEO who will be supported by a member of the Executive Leadership Plus Team (ELT+). The College will write to the individual within ten working days of the appeal meeting to confirm the College’s decision.

This decision is final and there is no further right of appeal.

Further Education Applicants with Additional Learning Support (ALS) or Special Educational Needs/Disability (SEND)

Applicants have the opportunity and are encouraged to declare a SEND or ALS need at any time during the admissions process. Any applicant who declares a SEND or ALS need is referred to the ALS/SEND Team.

The ALS/SEND Team will ensure that:

- An applicant’s needs are assessed and discussed fully with the appropriate people, for example the applicant and/or parents/carers, the schools and the curriculum teams.
- An appropriate assessment of support needs is carried out.

Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 8 of 20

- Appropriate support will be agreed and put in place.
- Any reasonable adjustments are in place.
- Curriculum teams are supported to produce an inclusive risk assessment where necessary.
- The college is able to provide a range of different personalised Inclusion and Support services to meet the varying educational needs of its students. The college prospectus and website describes in greater detail the types of additional support available.

Any study programme offer made, can be subject to approval and agreement of High Needs Funding from the relevant commissioning Local Authority (LA). Where timely applications are made and the Inclusion Service is able to negotiate with the LA prior to enrolment the LA will agree funding in principle. Where late applications are made curriculum and the Inclusion Service will work together to ensure appropriate support is in place and LA agreement is sought as soon as possible.

Higher Education Students with disabilities

Applicants will have the opportunity to declare a disability or support need at any time during the admissions process. All applicants will get information about Disabled Students Allowances and be supported to apply for them by the DSA co-ordinator.

If students require screening for learning disabilities they will be required to pay any initial dyslexia screening cost (approx £14), any further Educational Psychologist assessment may be covered by the College student support fund. The DSA co-ordinator will work with applicants to initiate support plans prior to entry onto programme.

Applicants with criminal convictions

The College has a duty of care to all its users. In order to fulfil this responsibility, the College operates a procedure whereby all those applying to study here should self-declare if they have an unspent criminal conviction. Those declaring such a conviction will be risk assessed to assess their suitability for undertaking the course for which they have applied.

The College asks applicants to declare information about any unspent criminal convictions throughout the admissions process. This information is assessed prior to any conditional offer being made. A risk assessment is undertaken by the Head of Academy.

Having a criminal record does not necessarily prevent applicants from studying at the College. This will depend on the nature of the course applied for and the circumstances and background of the offence.

The College reserves the right to withdraw any student who knowingly does not self-declare an unspent criminal conviction.

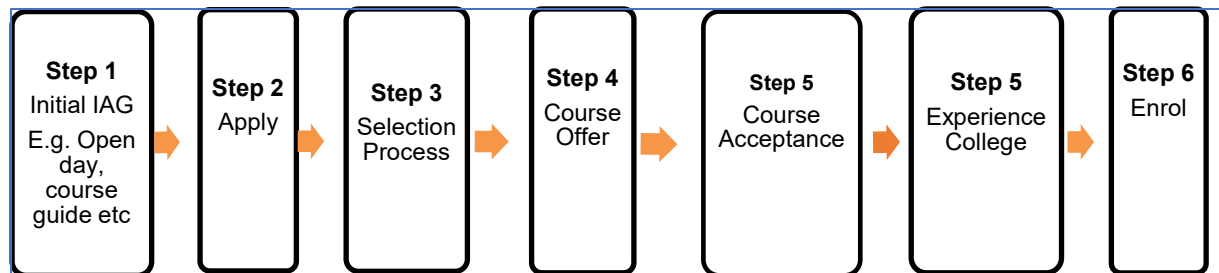
Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 9 of 20

GUIDELINES

Admissions Process

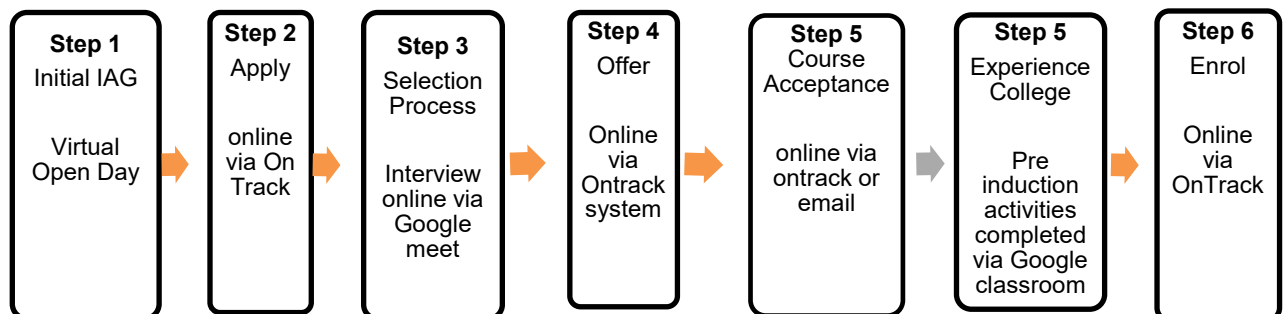
This section sets out the guidelines which applicants can expect through their admissions journey and key responsibilities for staff.

Throughout the admissions journey applicants will progress through each of the stages below.



Covid 19

If there is additional Government restrictions and guidance, online resources will be utilised within the admissions journey, see example below:



Admissions Information and Timeline

Further Education (FE) – New applicants for Full Time Courses

- Applications for full time programmes will be considered from November of the year prior to the September start date in the next academic year. Applications can be made via Sheffield Progress, college website or via paper application form.
- Applications made for higher education programmes through UCAS will be required to adhere to the UCAS timeline for applicants published on the UCAS website.
- All applicants for full time FE programmes will have an interview within 4 weeks of applying. This interview will be undertaken by curriculum tutors who will make the decision on whether to offer an unconditional or conditional place, and what these conditions are, or make no offer where the tutor feels the applicant is not suitable and refer on to IAG.
- Applicants for FE programmes will normally be given an offer for their first-choice programme, except in circumstances where the curriculum tutors deem that further

Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 10 of 20

guidance is needed based on the information supplied on the application or during interview.

- All applicants who are provided with a course offer will also have the opportunity to attend a 'experience college' session activity with curriculum tutors.
- Student Experience Advises will seek additional information and consult with staff within the SEND team if it is felt that the applicant would benefit from further support.
- Unconditional and Conditional offers will be provided within 3 days of the interview taking place, Conditions will vary between the courses but should include the following:
 - Meet entry requirements e.g. GCSE exam results
 - Complete initial assessment in English and maths or produce evidence of grades
- The course offer will be sent via Sheffield Progress, letter, email and text via the admissions and student funding team.
- Applicants can accept their course offer online via OnTrack, email or via telephone to the Admissions and Student Funding Team.
- Applicants are advised to accept the offer within 3 weeks of the offer being made to secure their place on the course.
- Where the offer is not accepted within the 3 weeks the offer may be withdrawn Conditions will be confirmed in an offer email. the ASFT team will attempt to contact all applicants before an offer or application is withdrawn.
- Where an applicant is not offered a place on their first-choice course, an alternative course will be suggested, or a referral made.
- All applicants will be required to complete an English and maths initial assessment if they cannot produce evidence of their current grades. A diagnostic assessment is conducted during Induction to ensure the learner is on the right level of course and to assess any additional learning needs. If required, the applicant is placed on an English and/or maths programme. All 16-18 years old who have not achieved English and/or maths GCSE at either a C or grade 4 will be required to re-sit their English and/or maths at either GCSE or Functional Skills level depending on their grades.

Date/s	Admissions Activity
November onwards	Applications open and processed for FT courses for the next academic year
November onwards	Interviews start for FT courses
December onwards	Course Offers sent and Acceptances received
February to June	Experience college events take place
June	Enrolment information sent to applicants
August and September	Enrolment events take place
September	Student Inductions take place and timetables issued

Further Education (FE) – Internally Progressing students for Full Time Courses

- Current students move up to the next year or level through the internal progression process which takes place from March to May.
- All students will have a progression discussion with their Course Tutor or Tutor Mentor and offered a place for the following year or an agreed referral to another curriculum area or IAG.
- The majority of internally progressing students will progress vertically (within the same curriculum area) to the next level of their current course, with smaller numbers progressing diagonally (to a different curriculum area) or horizontally (to a course at the same level).

Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 11 of 20

- For some learners, an apprenticeship will be the right option and many second-year level 3's should be considering our College HE provision, where appropriate.
- Internal applicants may be considered for progression to a higher level programme for which they do not have the minimum entry requirements by recommendation from their existing Course Tutor and/or Head of Academy.
- They will need to complete an interview and complete any relevant assessments prior to enrolment to ensure they meet standard required to succeed on programme.

Higher Education Courses

Directly funded courses and Franchised Courses

- Applicants will apply through UCAS by the 26th January each year. Applicants must adhere to the UCAS timeline for applicants which is published on the UCAS website. Part-time programmes: are not offered through this route.
- All applicants will have an interview within 4 weeks of applying. This interview will be undertaken by programme lead who will make the decision on whether to offer an unconditional or conditional place, and what these conditions are, or make no offer where the tutor feels the applicant is not suitable and refer on to IAG.
- All applicants who are provided with a course offer will also have the opportunity to attend a 'experience college' session activity with curriculum tutors.
- Unconditional and Conditional offers will be provided within 3 days of the interview taking place, Conditions will vary between the courses but are aimed at meeting entry requirements e.g. A level exam results, GCSE (or equivalent) maths and English, completion and successful t of entry assessment task or portfolio.
- The course offer will be sent via UCAS, letter, email and text via the admissions and student funding team, this communication will provide information relating to terms and conditions or where to access these terms and conditions.
- Applicants can accept or decline their course offer online via UCAS. Applicants must accept or decline their offer before their "decide by" date – for applicants who received their decision before the 19th May, this will be the 9th June
- All applicants who are provided with a course offer will also have the opportunity to attend a 'experience college' session activity with programme leads.
 - Applicants who submit applications after the 30th June will be processed through Clearing which opens on the 5th July.

Date/s	Admissions Activity
October onwards	UCAS Applications open for the next academic year
26 th January	Main Application Deadline
25 th February	UCAS Extra Opens
19 th May	Deadline for institution decision on applications made before 26th January
9 th June	Deadline for applicants to accept offers received before 19th May
30 th June	Any new applications received after this date are entered into Clearing
4 th July	Last day for existing applicants to apply for a course in Extra
5 th July	Clearing Opens
14 th July	Deadline for institution decision on applications submitted by 30th June
Early August	Results Embargo for SQA/JCQ tbc
9th August 2022	SQA results day
18th August 2022	A-level results day
18 th August onwards	Enrolment events take place
September	Student Inductions take place and timetables issued

Part Time FE Courses

- The College offers a wide range of part-time courses with a variety of admissions processes. Applications and enrolments could take place all year depending on the course.
- Some part time courses will require applicants to attend an assessment session/and or interview and the outcome of these assessments will form the basis of any offers made.
- Unconditional and Conditional offers will be provided within 3 days of the interview taking place, Conditions will vary between the courses but should include the following:
 - Meet entry requirements e.g. GCSE exam results
 - Complete initial assessment in English and maths or produce evidence of grades
- The course offer will be sent via letter, email and text via the admissions and student funding team.
- Applicants will be required to accept the offer of a place within 3 weeks or the offer may be withdrawn.
- Applicants are able to accept their course offer online via OnTrack, email or via telephone to the Admissions and Student Funding Team.
- Student Experience Advisers will seek additional information and consult with staff within the SEND team if it is felt that the applicant would benefit from further support.
- Where an applicant is not offered a place on their first-choice course, an alternative course will be suggested, or a referral made.

Apprenticeships

- All applicants who express an interest in Apprenticeships or apply for a current Apprenticeship vacancy should be referred directly to the Apprenticeship Recruitment Team.
- Apprenticeship programmes are recruited to all year round.
- Dependent on the campus, applicants will either be invited in for a face to face screening interview and initial English and maths assessment or a remote screening interview plus skills scan and KSB scan.
- Applicants who pass the screening process will be put forward to employers for consideration for their vacancies.
- Any applicants who do not pass the screening assessment are referred to the Admissions and Student Funding Team for additional advice and guidance.
- The admission procedures for an apprenticeship are as follows:
- An employer expresses an interest in recruiting an apprentice either by an incoming enquiry or outbound sales activity.
- The relevant Employer Engagement Manager goes to meet with potential employer to explain Apprenticeship's programme
- All live vacancies advertised on Find an Apprenticeship are also advertised in the Apprenticeship section of the College's own website
- Applications are received through either the Find an Apprenticeship website, the College's own website or directly, and candidates are shortlisted based on the quality of the application
- The employer interviews shortlisted candidates and makes offers if a suitable candidate for the job is found. At this stage an employer can decide to withdraw the vacancy if they have not found a suitable candidate, or extend it
- The successful applicant is offered an Apprenticeship with the employer
- Those who are unsuccessful are referred to alternative vacancies or provided with further advice and guidance.

Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 13 of 20

International students

The College welcomes overseas applications for English Language courses only. The College does not currently hold a UK Border Agency sponsor licence under Student Visa and therefore cannot currently accept applications or possible enrolments from students who want to study full-time in the United Kingdom using a Student Visa.

International applications will be referred to the International department to undertake residency checks and assess their eligibility for financial assistance before the application can proceed.

Entry requirements

Entry requirements will vary between courses. However, clear information on entry requirements for each course are available via:

- The Sheffield College course guides:
 - [2022-23 Full Time Course Guide](#)
 - [2022-23 University Level and Professional Courses Guide](#)
 - [2020-2021 Access to Higher Education Course Guide](#)
 - [202-23 Sixth Form Guide](#)
 - [Apprenticeships Course Guide](#)
- The Sheffield College website: www.sheffcol.ac.uk.
- www.ucas.com
- www.sheffieldprogress.co.uk
- www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk

The College reserves the right to request references for prospective students.

Higher Education students wishing to transfer from another HE Institution or with Prior learning

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a form of assessment which makes use of evidence of a learner's previous non - certificated achievements to demonstrate competence or achievement within a unit or qualification. Through the RPL process, evidence of a candidate's previous achievement (learning) is assessed against the learning outcomes of a unit.

- Students wishing to transfer from one HE provider to another may do so in accordance with the HE Recognition of Prior Learning Policy which is identified in section 8 of this policy. This may include the transfer of Credit.
- **Recognition of prior Certificated Learning (RPCL)** - Recognition of learning which has been undertaken but has not resulted in credits, such as non-UK awards, professional development - this may have been formally assessed.
- **Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)** - This is the recognition of learning which has been achieved through experience, for example, in the workplace or through voluntary activities.

Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 14 of 20

- **Credit Transfer** - Allows credit awarded by one higher education awarding body to be recognised and included towards the requirements for a programme at another higher education provider; or that allows credit gained on a particular programme to contribute towards the requirements of a different one.

As the college works with a number of awarding bodies the process may be different dependent on the course applied for, this will be advised at the interview stage. In order for RPL/credit transfer to be valid, any RPL/Credit Transfer assessment must be undertaken in accordance with the college Recognition of prior learning policy

Applicant Entitlements

All applicants are entitled to:

- Have access to information, promotional materials and activities which are accurate (at the time of publishing), relevant, current and accessible that will enable them to make informed decisions about their options.
- View the College and its facilities prior to the commencement of a course.
- Receive confidential and impartial IAG.
- Have access to clear and detailed information about the admissions process that is used for the course(s) they are applying to.
- Expect that the selection process is followed consistently and fairly and that admission to a course is based on the assessment of a range of criteria that includes academic and non-academic criteria.
- Be informed by the College, of the conditions for entry onto the course at the time a course offer is made.
- Have access to information regarding learning and/or support needs in advance of enrolment.
- Be provided with enrolment information once they accept their place by 30th June.
- An induction that supports their transition to the College and the course
- Where requested, be provided with feedback on why they were unsuccessful in gaining a place on the course.
Be made aware of any terms and conditions, and fee information prior to a course offer being made.

Applicant Responsibilities

Applicants need to ensure they:

- Are familiar with the admissions process relevant to the course they are applying for.
- Follow College procedures associated with this policy.
- Keep the College informed of changes to their circumstances or contact details.
- Attend with all selection activities and fully engage with them.
- Confirm offer acceptance or rejection within 3 weeks of the course offer being made or by their UCAS “Reply by” date for HE applications.
- Ensure that at each stage of the admissions and appeals process, they provide honest and accurate information in a timely manner which could have a bearing on admission decisions
- Ensuring they declare any learning difficulty/disability and/or support need at the earliest stage possible within the admissions process, or when the need becomes apparent.
- They re-enrol each academic year.

Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 15 of 20

Admissions Appeals

Applicants have the right to appeal any admissions decisions. Please refer to section 9 of this policy for the Appeals procedure.

Reasons for not offering an applicant a place at College

On some occasions, the College is unable to offer a place to an applicant. In these situations, the College will do everything possible to find a suitable alternative for the applicant. The following are examples of reasons why applicants may not be offered a place on a course:

- The applicant does not meet the entry criteria and it is therefore unlikely that they would succeed in, or benefit from, attending the course
- The applicant has provided false or misleading information
- The applicant does not have the right to stay and study in the UK
- Following a full investigation (including Disclosure and Barring Service checks) the applicant is found to be unsuitable to work with any relevant groups
- The College has reason to believe that the applicant's presence is likely to endanger other students and/or staff in the College
- The provision of the necessary facilities and support would place an unjustifiable demand upon College resources
- The applicant has previously been excluded from the College
- The applicant has outstanding tuition fee debt to the College or is unable to fund or pay course fees.
- The applicant has previously enrolled with the College but did not complete their course.

Policy Evaluation

The following measures will be considered when evaluating the success of this policy:

- Conversation rates throughout each stage of the admissions process
- Achievement of operational key performance indicators
- Positive student feedback from the surveys below:
 - Admissions Survey
 - Enrolment Survey
 - Induction Survey
- Positive student feedback from learner voice forums
- Positive feedback from other stakeholders including parents, employers and external stakeholders
- Positive feedback from staff on the effectiveness of the policy and procedure;
- High level of student retention
- Low student withdrawals and transfers following the induction period

Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 16 of 20

College Staff Responsibilities

Faculty Assistant/Vice Principals

Faculty Assistant/Vice Principals are responsible for:

- The implementation and compliance of the Admissions policy and guidelines within their faculty and ensuring students begin their College journey at the most appropriate starting point.
- Ensuring that suitably and sufficiently trained staff are identified and available within faculties to support the implementation of the Admissions policy.
- Ensuring that individual Job Descriptions and Person Specifications clearly define the role, the tasks and skills needed in order to reflect the level of responsibility in relation to Admissions policy.
- Ensuring any changes to courses or assessment regulations must go through the appropriate channels and will be communicated to applicants.
- Articulating entry criteria (where possible) for courses as per the timescales identified in the table below. This must take place for each intake in line with validation partners and College guidance, to allow the criteria to be detailed in publicity material and online. They will do this in line with CMA Guidance;

Provision	Timescale
Higher Education	12 months
Further Education	12 months
Apprenticeships	12 months
International	12 months

- Confirm course fees for all courses prior to courses starting as per the timescales identified in table below:

Provision	Timescale
Higher Education	12 months
Further Education	6 months
Apprenticeships	6 months
International	6 months

Heads of Academy/Apprenticeships

Faculty Heads are responsible for:

- Ensuring the Admissions and Student Funding team have dates and names of staff conducting selection activities for all courses by the 15th October each year (or as soon as is reasonably practical).
- Ensuring all selection processes are conducted in a timely manner (20 working days from receipt of application) and appropriate College systems are updated.
- Ensure all relevant online systems are fully updated. E.g. Online interview records
- Ensure selection activities are carried out fairly and consistently
- Implementing policies and procedures in line with this policy.
- Implementing an induction for all relevant employees and emphasising the Admissions aspect of their duties.
- Implementing Admissions training for employees identified within the

Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 17 of 20

Admissions process.

- Implementing effective communications on Admissions to curriculum and support staff
- Review of the entry criteria and processes with relevant support teams and, where relevant, partner organisations such as HEIs;
- Ensure regular updates take place on the curriculum offer with key support teams such as Admissions and Student Funding
- Promotional materials and recruitment activities provide accurate information about the course and progression opportunities which will enable an applicant to make informed decisions.
- Clearly articulate the recruitment process to all employers. In all cases, applicants must go through a selection process and the curriculum team need to be assured of student capability prior to courses starting.
- The admissions processes are carried out fairly and consistently.
- Confirm course fees (where possible) for all courses prior to courses starting as per the timescales identified in table below:

Provision	Timescale
Higher Education	12 months
Further Education	6 months
Apprenticeships	6 months
International	6 months

- Ensuring pre entry IAG events are staffed appropriately and accurate IAG is provided
- Ensure all enquiries when needed are dealt with within 3 working days.
- Provide the SEND team with all the required information and support so all SEND referral assessments can be completed in a timely manner.
- Arranging enrolment with the Head of Learner Recruitment and induction with Assistant Principal for Student Experience the by 1st June each year.
- If a course is not running, this needs to be communicated to (where possible) the teams below and in accordance with the schedule, applicants will then be notified by the teams identified below:

Provision	Timescale	Team Responsible
Higher Education	4 months	ASF team
Further Education	4 months	ASF team
Apprenticeships	4 months	Apprenticeship Recruitment Team
International	4 months	International Team

Curriculum Teams

This policy requires curriculum teams to ensure that:

- Ensure selection activities include information on course structure, assessment, fee information, careers, enrichment and student support.
- Applicants are made an offer which is appropriate to both the applicant and course entry requirements and reflects the most appropriate starting point.
- All College systems are updated accordingly as per the flowcharts detailed in the Admissions process section above.

Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 18 of 20

- In the event that the criteria for entry are not met, wherever possible an appropriate alternative offer will be made to the applicant or internal referral made to the relevant department in a timely manner
- They inform the applicant of the offer conditions at the time the offer is made;
- Where requested, they provide feedback to an applicant who has not been offered a place on the reason why they were unsuccessful;
- All applicants are given the opportunity within selection activities to declare any learning difficulty/disability and/or support need at every stage of their application.

Admissions and Student Funding Team, (ASF)

The ASF team are responsible for:

- Maintaining a proactive and positive working relationship with curriculum teams and faculty management.
- All communications are via standard templates identified in the admission process flowcharts above.
- Providing accurate and timely IAG to prospective students
- All College systems are updated in a timely manner and according to flowcharts detailed in the Admissions process section above.
- Ensuring all applicants are provided with any related terms and conditions at the course offer stage.
- Ensuring key performance indicators identified in the table below are achieved.

Admissions stage	Key performance indicators
Enquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enquiries are dealt with within 3 working days.
Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications acknowledged via text and email within 24 hours
Selection Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information sent with 15 working days of application being received • Reminders sent 48 hours prior to selection activity taking place • Non-attenders are chased within 3 working days via text, email and letter.
Course offers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course offers are sent with 3 working days of selection activity taking place
Feedback Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback surveys sent within 24 hours of course offer being made throughout the Admissions process.
Enrolment Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolment information is sent by 30th June each year for FE and 18th Aug for HE. • Feedback surveys sent within 3 working days of enrolment taking place

Apprenticeship Recruitment Team (ARC)

The ARC team are responsible for:

- Conducting all interviews and assessments for Apprenticeship applicants

Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 19 of 20

- Arranging selection activities with employers in a timely manner.
- Communicate outcomes of interviews to applicants in a timely, constructive and positive manner.
- Ensuring enrolments are carried out in a timely manner and the applicant and employer are supported through each stage of the process.
- Maintaining communication with Employers throughout the apprenticeship recruitment process.

Date: 8/11/2021	Doc Name: Admissions Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 20 of 20