



# Admissions Policy

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- Originator: Marie Szymonski, Head of Marketing & Admissions
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If you require this policy in an alternative format – please contact [admissions@gcs.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@gcs.ac.uk)

Please note, this policy has been translated and is available in Welsh.

## 1. Context

The aim of this policy is to ensure equality of treatment for all people seeking entry as learners to the College.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all full time and part time learners who wish to enrol in the College.

## 3. Statement of purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the fair treatment of all applicants.

The College welcomes applications from all sectors of the community. We will consider all applications on their merit and ability and will not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, disability, age, religion or belief, faith, socio-economic status, responsibility for dependents, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership.

## 4. The Policy

### Applying to the College

- 4.1 All enquirers can gain accurate and up to date information from the College requesting a current School Leavers' Guide (full time) or accessing the College website (full and part time).
- 4.2 All full time and some part time courses may be required to have an interview as part of the admissions process.
- 4.3 Individual programmes will have their own entry requirements, based on qualifications, experience and suitability. Learners will be informed of these at an early stage of the application process.
- 4.4 Falsification of entry qualifications by applicants may result in disciplinary action or the applicant being refused a place.
- 4.5 The College is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities, including those with learning difficulties, are treated fairly. All reasonable adjustments to provision will be made to ensure that learners with a disability are not disadvantaged. All disclosures of disability will be treated sensitively and used only for the potential benefit of the learner.

#### 4.6 Welsh Language Standards

- Applicants wishing to discuss their application in Welsh can do so with a Welsh speaking member of the admissions team
- All applicants will receive bilingual correspondence
- Applicants who have identified themselves as fluent Welsh speakers or are from a Welsh medium comprehensive school will be given the option to have their interview in Welsh
- A Welsh/bilingual culture and ethos is actively promoted at the College
- Learners on all courses may complete written work through the medium of Welsh if they wish to do so. Support will be given to assist any learner opting to write some or all of their coursework through the medium of Welsh or bilingually.
- Courses/modules that can be taught through the medium of Welsh/bilingually are listed on the website and are indicated in the School Leavers' Guide.

4.7 The College can only run classes in courses and subjects where there are sufficient numbers of students. If a course or subject is not viable, the learner will be advised on making an alternative choice.

4.8 Applicants must:

- Meet the specific entry requirements of any programme or course
- Agree to pay any fees required
- Agree to abide by the College's Student Code of Conduct
- Confirm acceptance or rejection of any place offered by the date specified
- Complete a medical disclosure and consent agreement online if they are a full time student.

4.9 Places will be allocated based on:

- The learner fulfilling the conditions for entry
- The availability of places.

4.10 Normally applicants under the age of 16 will not be allowed entry onto full time programmes. In exceptional circumstances, where the applicant's educational needs cannot be met in school, the application will be considered. All such applications must go through the Schools Manager who will liaise with the LEA, the school, the College, the parents and the child.

All Key Stage 4 (14-16 year old) students from schools applying for courses at the College as part of their Year 10 and 11 studies must follow the 14-16 enrolment process (Appendix 4).

Students under the age of 16 cannot be enrolled onto part time evening courses.

- 4.11 ESOL applicants and applicants whose first language is not English may be asked to provide evidence of their ESOL qualifications or to undertake an English Language assessment to establish whether their level of English is appropriate for the course.
- 4.12 International students are accepted based on the following criteria:
- IELTS for UKVI score, this needs to meet the course specific entry requirements
  - Overseas qualifications - these must be equivalent to the course specific entry requirements (UKENIC used to compare)
  - Students must meet all of the criteria set out in the UKVI Student Route policy guidance, which is updated regularly.

## The right to refuse an application

- 4.13 The College reserves the right to refuse admission to any applicant who:
- Is unable to meet the entry requirements
  - Has a relevant criminal conviction which is either not spent or can never become spent (see section 5 below)
  - Has previously been excluded or subject to the College's Disciplinary Procedure. If this is the case, a final decision is based a return to study interview
  - Has outstanding debts with the College
  - Provides false or misleading information on an application or enrolment form.
- 4.14 The College reserves the right to make the final decision on whether or not to accept an application or enrolment to the College.
- 4.15 In the event that the College offers a place and subsequently discovers that the learner has committed an action that would constitute gross misconduct under the College's Disciplinary Procedure, the College reserves the right to withdraw the offer.
- 4.16 Applicants who are unsuccessful in obtaining a place on the course for which they have applied will be offered appropriate advice and guidance to discuss other options.

## 5. Criminal convictions and DBS checks

- 5.1 Where the College has knowledge of a criminal conviction the College will follow the process outlined in the Ex-Offenders Policy (Students).
- 5.2 All students on courses involving placements with children or vulnerable adults are required to have a current DBS certificate, undertaken in the last three months (if by another organisation) or within the last three years if undertaken by the College.

The cost of the DBS certificate is expected to be paid by the learner. Learners who receive Financial Contingency Funding will not be expected to pay for their DBS certificate as it will be covered by the fund.

## 6. Appeals

- 6.1 Should an applicant dispute a decision not to admit them to the College, they may appeal using the College Appeals Procedure. The original decision will only be reconsidered if it did not follow the College's Admissions Policy or other relevant policy and/or the applicant provided evidence that was not revealed earlier in the admissions process.

## 7. Related documents

- 7.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:
- Strategic Equality Action Plan
  - Equality and Diversity Policy Statement
  - Learner Charter
  - Student Disciplinary Procedures
  - Ex-Offenders Policy
  - College Appeals Procedure
  - College Privacy Notices

## 8. Policy date and review

- 8.1 The date of this policy is October 2021. The policy will be reviewed every three years. The date of the next review is September 2024.
9. Gower College Swansea is committed to the promotion of the Welsh language, in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards.

# Appendix 1: admissions process for full time applicants

## 1.1 Stages

An application form is received via the College website.

For paper applicants, a holding letter is sent out to the applicant within three working days advising them that an interview date will be arranged in due course.

Applications received via the College website are acknowledged automatically.

Applicants are able to disclose their language preference, disabilities or learning needs on the full time application form and can request adjustments to the interview process.

## 1.1 Exceptions

All applications for full time higher education courses are processed via the UCAS application system.

If criminal convictions are disclosed the Ex-Offenders policy is implemented.

## 1.2 Stages

Faculty interviews are arranged with the appropriate member of staff.

An interview invitation is sent to the applicant giving a minimum seven days' notice. Invites are usually sent by email unless the applicant has requested a letter.

During the admissions process the applicant receives the following information about the programme:

- Entry requirements
- Content and type of assessment
- Progression opportunities
- College expectations e.g. Student Code of Conduct
- Pre-enrolment assessment
- The learning support available for those applicants with additional needs
- Information on financial help available
- Any additional course costs e.g. equipment, books, etc.
- Qualifications which will be achieved on successful completion of the course.

## 1.2 Exceptions

If the applicant has been excluded in the past, they will undertake a return to study interview before their application can progress.

The ILS department arrange their interviews directly. The process has been adapted and is flexible to meet the needs of the individual students.

Pre-screening may be required for some learning areas.

## 1.3 Stages

The applicant attends the faculty interview.

At this stage most applicants will be offered a place on their chosen course and given a course offer booklet.

Confirmation of this offer is also sent by email. The applicant accepts their course offer and completes the medical disclosure and consent agreement online.

For applicants with no email the offer and forms will be sent by post.

## 1.3 Exceptions

If an applicant is not offered a place on their chosen course, an alternative faculty interview is arranged if appropriate.

If an applicant does not attend the first faculty interview then they are automatically rescheduled a new one.

If they fail to attend the second interview, they are sent an email asking if they want to continue with their application.

## 1.4 Stages

At enrolment if the applicant meets the entry requirements they will be enrolled onto the course.

If the entry requirements are not met, but the lecturer is supporting enrolment of the student onto the course, the Dean of Faculty or LAM must sanction the decision.

## 1.4 Exceptions

If the applicant does not attend the enrolment interview, they are contacted to find out why they have not attended and if they would like to rearrange.

If the applicant does not achieve the entry requirements then they are referred to a lower level course in an appropriate area.

If the applicant decides they do not want to enrol on the course they originally applied for, then they are referred back to admissions.

## Appendix 2: admissions process for part time students

### 2.1 Stages

For the majority of part time courses, the applicant can request a telephone interview and enrol online.

Interviews can be over the phone or in person as required.

### 2.1 Exceptions

N/A

### 2.2 Stages

Where interviews are required they will be held by the faculty staff.

The decision on whether an interview is necessary for the course is decided by the faculty team.

During the admissions process the applicant is entitled to the following information about the programme:

- Entry requirements
- Content and type of assessment
- Progression opportunities
- College expectations e.g. Student Code of Conduct
- The learning support available for those applicants with additional needs
- Information on financial help available
- Any additional course costs e.g. equipment, books, etc.
- Qualifications which will be achieved.

### 2.2 Exceptions

If the applicant has been excluded in the past, they will undertake a return to study interview before their application can progress.

If criminal convictions are disclosed the Ex-Offenders Policy is implemented.

### 2.3 Stages

At this stage most students will be offered a place on their chosen course. This is confirmed by the student enrolling on the course and paying the appropriate fee through the enrolment process, or by completing the part time enrolment form.

### 2.3 Exceptions

N/A

## Appendix 3: admissions process for international students

### 3.1 Stages

Prospective students must fully complete an international application form.

Students must provide evidence to satisfy course entry requirements – Level 2 equivalent and IELTS for UKVI Certificate.

Qualifications are checked by the international office (UKENIC/IELTS verification service). Translations provided if applicable.

Students must provide a copy of their passport and any visa pages.

If satisfied that the student meets our academic requirements and has provided genuine identification documents, international office staff conduct an online interview using a pre-written list of credibility/interview questions.

If the interview is satisfactory, a conditional offer letter is issued.

Conditions include payment of tuition fee deposit, proof of maintenance funds, parental consent to travel and live independently in the UK and any other specifics required by UKVI e.g. TB certificates.

We also state our refunds policy on the conditional offer letter which states that any students deemed not to be genuine by the UKVI will not be entitled to a refund. This is to deter any non-genuine applications.

Once conditions are met, we issue a CAS, which forms our unconditional offer.

Visa application support is provided to all students if required.

If visa is acquired, students are then assigned a homestay accommodation provider (we have a portfolio of risk assessed and DBS checked host families). We also issue a pre arrival pack, which provides guidance on studying in the UK and travel options to ensure their safe arrival in Swansea

If the student's visa is accepted, we will become their UKVI sponsor.

### 3.1 Exceptions

N/A

## Appendix 4: admissions process for the schools programme

### 4.1 Stages

April/May:

JA (Junior Academy) - the application form is received and an ID created.

JC (Junior College) - programme of courses offered to schools. The school requests a course.

### 4.1 Exceptions

If the student has been excluded in the past an interview with the Schools Manager and course curriculum leader is arranged.

### 4.2 Stages

May/June:

JA - The Schools Manager arranges interviews for students referred by the school contact and the faculties. The faculties undertake entry interviews.

During the admission processes the applicant is entitled to the following information about the course:

- Course information card
- Clothing and costs
- Qualifications gained
- Progression opportunities
- Content and type of assessment
- Any special arrangements for support needs.

JC - the College confirms the course requested. Enrolment / consent forms sent to schools.

### 4.2 Exceptions

Individual students applying to infill on post 16 provision.

These will be interviewed by the Schools Manager and curriculum leader. Places only awarded if space is available in September.

### 4.3 Stages

June:

JA and JC - the faculties undertake induction activities in consultation with the Schools Manager.

The re-enrolment of year 10 to 11 on two year programmes.

### 4.3 Exceptions

N/A

### 4.4 Stages

June/July:

JA - confirmation of places, the Schools Manager and CLs liaise to confirm places for students. The Schools Manager will confirm the list of students with the school contact.

### 4.4 Exceptions

If the student is not accepted the reason must be given to the school first. The school may appeal with further references to the Schools Manager and CL. The letter is then sent to the parent and the student.

### 4.5 Stages

JA – the faculty office sends welcome letters, course specific costs and parent information packs.

JA – the parents to return any forms to faculties prior to starting the course.

July:

JA - learners attend College for enrolment.

JC - The Schools Manager to agree terms and conditions with schools.  
September: Enrolment of new JC 14-16s.

### 4.5 Exceptions

N/A

## Appendix 5: admissions process for full time and part time higher education students

### 5.1 Stages – Full Time

An application form is received via UCAS. Details of the applicant are entered onto QL and a student ID is created.

The application form is sent to the course leader via PDF for a decision.

### 5.1 Exceptions – Full Time

If criminal convictions are disclosed the Unspent Criminal Convictions Policy is implemented.

For University of Gloucestershire franchised courses, the applications in UCAS are accessed directly by the university's admissions team.

A PDF of the application form is sent to HE admissions (GCS). The application is sent to the course leader for a decision. The decision is then emailed back to UoG admissions to add onto UCAS.

### 5.2 Stages – Full Time

The course leader gives the applicant a conditional or unconditional offer based on the application form. This is entered onto UCAS by HE Admissions.

Contextual Admissions statement:

The College may in some cases contextualise admissions offers based on Higher Education widening participation criteria. The College will be required to operate in line with partner university, awarding organisation, employment sector and Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) requirements, guidance and policy with regard to any admissions decisions made.

An interview is arranged if appropriate.

Some courses require an interview and the submission of a portfolio e.g. FD Fashion Design with Enterprise and FD Visual Effects and Motion Graphics.

During the admissions and enrolment process the applicant is provided with the following information

- Course fees and information on SFW
- Entry requirements
- Qualifications gained
- Progression opportunities

- Student Code of Conduct – College expectations (medical disclosures and consents completed following enrolment)
- The learning support available (for those applicants with additional needs)
- Support available for students who have left care or who are care leavers
- Any additional course costs
- University and College terms and conditions.

When the applicant makes a firm or insurance choice, the stage code is changed on QL.

If an applicant accepts their offer (firm choice) they are emailed an electronic HE course offer booklet.

Enrolment is online, an enrolment link is sent to the students prior to the start of the course.

## 5.2 Exceptions – Full Time

N/A

## 5.3 Stages – Part Time

PT HE students need to apply for their course of study via the part time HE application form on the College website.

The application form is received by HE Admissions automatically via email, and the information is inputted onto QL.

An interview is arranged with the course leader.

When an applicant is made an offer to join a PT HE course they are asked to confirm their acceptance via email. Once their acceptance has been confirmed they are emailed an electronic HE course offer booklet.

Enrolment is online, an enrolment link is sent to the students prior to the start of the course.

During the admissions and enrolment process the applicant is entitled to the following information about the programme:

- Course fees and information on SFW
- Entry Requirements
- Qualifications gained
- Progression opportunities
- Student code of conduct – college expectations
- The learning support available (for those applicants with additional needs)
- Support available for students who have left care or are care leavers
- Any additional course costs.
- University and College terms and conditions.

## 5.3 Exceptions – Part Time

### Higher Apprenticeships

All higher apprentices must apply via the online PT HE application form – this ensures that we have their details on the system.

Once applications come through via email, HE admissions will liaise with the programme leaders to check if the applicants are PT learners or if they are apprentices. If they are apprentices, the programme leaders will inform HE admissions if an offer has been made and if the applicant has been signed up onto the apprenticeship programme.

An offer email will be sent which will contain information they need to know as HE students.

Enrolment is online, an enrolment link is sent to the students prior to the start of the course.

If criminal convictions are disclosed the Unspent Criminal Convictions Policy is implemented.

## Appendix 6: Admissions process for Work Based Learning

### 6.1 Stages – Work Based Learning

An application form is received via the website.

### 6.1 Exceptions – Work Based Learning

If criminal convictions are disclosed the Ex-Offenders Policy is implemented.

### 6.2 Stages – Work Based Learning

If the applicant identifies on the application form that they have a placement then the details are passed to the WBL learner coaches.

WEST screening is arranged and the applicant is enrolled (this is needed so they can complete WEST).

Health and safety checks are carried out on the potential employer.

### 6.2 Exceptions – Work Based Learning

All Motor Vehicle apprenticeship applicants are interviewed by the WBL MV team, they have an aptitude test and are offered a place if they meet the requirements. The team also help find placements.

The FT Motor Vehicle are informed of when the interviews are taking place so they can give information about the FT options.

If appropriate, they are referred back to the admissions team for a FT interview.

### 6.3 Stages – Work Based Learning

If the applicant is a non-school leaver and does not have a placement then their details are passed to the Better Jobs, Better Futures team to contact and offer support.

If the applicant is a school leaver and does not have a placement they are contacted by admissions for advice and guidance and are offered an interview for a FT course.

They are also given advice on how to find a placement and sent links to useful websites.

Admissions keep in touch with the applicant so if they do decide to have a FT interview one can be arranged.

Once an applicant has secured a placement, the details are taken and passed along to WBL learner coaches.

WEST screening is arranged.

### 6.3 Exceptions – Work Based Learning

N/A