

CATEGORY:	Higher Education
TYPE:	Policy
TITLE:	HE Admissions
PERSON RESPONSIBLE:	Group Head of HE, Resources and Guidance
PURPOSE:	

The purpose of this policy is to provide prospective students and staff with a guide to the admission of Higher Education (HE) students at Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group (NSCG).

Scope

This policy covers admissions to HE courses at NSCG, both full- time and part time. For further information regarding admissions to courses awarded by our partner institutions, please see the University of Staffordshire admissions policy <https://www.staffs.ac.uk/admissions/admissions-policy> or the Wolverhampton University admissions policy <https://www.wlv.ac.uk/about-us/corporateinformation/wlv-policies/admissions-policy-and-process/>

Principles of Fair Admissions

NSCG endeavours to ensure that policies and procedures used to admit students are clear, fair, and explicit and consistently applied and are compliant with relevant legislation and meet the expectations of the Schwartz Report (2014) and the UK Higher Education Quality Code (2024). NSCG also recognises good practice in HE admissions as provided by UCAS and AoC.

Information and Guidance

NSCG is committed to providing prospective applicants with comprehensive information to facilitate informed choices and appropriate applications. We will provide high quality information and advice on all aspects of recruitment, selection and admissions including our entry requirements and course information. All course entry requirements, course content, duration and fees will be made public in line with information in the programme specification. The primary site of publication is the NSCG website. It will be the joint responsibility of relevant Curriculum Directors and the marketing department to ensure that all public information is consistent and in line with the programme specification.

Applications

Applications will be accepted via electronic submission only. The appropriate application form, determined by the specific course and enrolment status (full-time or part-time), can be accessed through a link provided on the website. Upon receipt, all applications will be centrally logged and subsequently forwarded to the relevant administrator, who will coordinate the assessment process with the curriculum staff

Assessment of applications

Applications will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Academic achievement or predicted achievement – do applicants meet the entry requirements?
- Personal statements – to understand skills, motivation and interest in subject
- References where requested
- Interview/ audition and selection events – to assess any non-academic requirements
- Portfolios to be assessed by tutors

Issues in considering application

- Plagiarism - If we detect plagiarism in personal statements, we reserve the right to decline the application or withdraw any offers made.
- Criminal Convictions - The College is committed to inclusion and equality of opportunity. Having a criminal conviction will not necessarily prevent someone from studying at the College; this will depend on the nature of the course and the circumstances and background of the offences. However, as the College operates on sites where there are FE and vulnerable students, safeguarding the whole student body represents our primary duty. All applicants will be asked to declare any convictions or cautions in as part of the enrolment process. Criminal convictions will be dealt with by the college safeguarding committee in accordance with the risk assessment chart. Some programmes require an enhanced DBS and the website and programme information documents will make this clear.
- Declared Learning Needs - We aim to support all learners regardless of their support needs. For applicants with a declared learning need NSCG will conduct an assessment to ensure that the College can make the required, reasonable adjustment to support learning. For OfS funded programmes applicants with disabilities or learning difficulties are advised to apply early for the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) as assessment for support is not undertaken within the College but through an external agency.
- International Students – NSCG does not hold a Student Sponsor Licence and does not accept international students on to HE programmes.
- Accurate Information - The applicant is responsible for ensuring that NSCG is in receipt of all information required to allow the institution to make a decision on their application and that all information is accurate. Omission of relevant information, or the supply of inaccurate information, may invalidate the application or the offer of a place.

Communication with applicants

Invitations for interviews or auditions will be communicated directly by the College. A minimum notice period of one to two weeks will be provided prior to scheduled interview dates. Any course-specific supplementary information pertinent to the interview will be included with the invitation. Within the standard admissions cycle, applicants typically receive an interview invitation via email within three weeks of the application submission date. In instances where an interview is not offered, applicants will be notified of this decision within three weeks of the application receipt date. Following the assessment process, applicants will receive direct communication from NSCG regarding the outcome of their application.

Feedback

Consistent generic feedback will be provided to applicants who are not invited for interview/audition/selection or who are subsequently not offered a place. More specific individualised feedback may be available on request.

Appeals and complaints

Unsuccessful applicants have the right of appeal in writing to the Head of Resources and Guidance within five working days of being refused admission to the College, explaining the reasons why the College should reconsider its decision. Appeals will be considered by a Panel chaired by the Vice Principal, whose decision is final.

Support and training for admissions staff

NSCG staff will continue to attend UCAS, AoC and Student Loan Company training events as required for CPD. They will also attend meetings at partner universities to ensure compliance with university policies. Regular training on admissions processes will be conducted by the Head of Resources and Guidance.