



# PLUMPTON

## COLLEGE

### Admissions Policy

This policy sets out a framework for student admissions to Plumpton College. The policy is applicable to all employees within the Plumpton College Group. For the avoidance of doubt the policy is non-contractual.

Any reference to Plumpton College is relevant to the Plumpton College Group, meaning any employee employed by its subsidiaries, its holding company or any subsidiary of its holding company.

SMT Assigned Owner	Principal
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The Senior Management Team (SMT) is delegated to approve minor changes to the policy in response to legal changes and best practice.

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## **1. Admissions statement and principles**

- 1.1 Plumpton College's vision is to be an innovative and inspirational College delivering excellent education, training and research that enables our students and employers to play a leading role in future industry growth and development. This is underpinned by our values which are to be:
- Ambitious
  - Progressive
  - Enterprising
  - Professional
  - Supportive
  - Passionate about everything we do
- 1.2 The College admissions policy is consistent with this vision and with the Equal Opportunities Policy aims to provide a fair, transparent and equitable system for all student admissions.
- 1.3 The procedures relating to the application process are clear so that any applicant is aware of the stages and the judgements that are made when admitting candidates for courses.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1 This policy applies to all College courses.
- 2.2 This policy applies to admissions for:
- Full and part time Further Education courses for young people (16-18) and adults at all levels
  - Apprenticeships
  - Higher Education programmes (full and part time)
  - Full cost recovery courses
  - Employer-related provision other than apprenticeships
  - 14-16 Provision

## **3. Information, Advice and Guidance**

- 3.1 Plumpton College will ensure that information about courses is made available through various media channels, including its website.
- 3.2 Requests for information are welcomed via dedicated phone lines and email address and are logged and responded to usually within 2 working days. All applicants are entitled to discuss their application in detail and are entitled to receive confidential and impartial information, advice and guidance at pre-entry and whilst on programme. The College holds MATRIX accreditation to confirm the quality of its impartial information, advice and guidance and has a process to meet the Gatsby Benchmarks set out in the national careers strategy by the national deadline.
- 3.3 On submission of an application form, applicants can at any time request information about the progress of their application. Each applicant will receive a response to any correspondence, usually within 2 working days of its receipt.

- 3.4 Taster Days and open events, virtual or live events (as dictated by Government Directives), are offered and advertised at various stages of the application process to enable an interactive and fully rounded comprehension of the college offer, facilities, student cohort and ethos prior to the commencement of a course allowing for an informed choice to be made by the applicant.
- 3.5 Applicants are required to attend an interview, these may be conducted remotely or on-campus, will leave the interview with a clear statement of what happens next and the outcome of the current interview. Any applicant that does not meet the entry criteria at interview will be offered a referral interview and guidance.

#### **4. Entry Criteria**

- 4.1 The College publishes on the website and prospectus, entry criteria for all of its courses.
- 4.2 Learners of compulsory school age (under 16) and applying for the Electively Home Educated courses must provide evidence in the form of a letter of being withdrawn from the state educational system for a minimum of six months.
- Applicants must be 14 years of age or older by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 to qualify for this provision.
- 4.3 In deciding whether to accept an application (or to enrol an individual on any course) account may need to be taken of any overriding health and safety concerns, barriers relating to professional requirements or the College's ability to make reasonable adjustments.
- 4.4 If the level of need or if safeguarding of a student is assessed as being too high for adjustments to be made that are reasonable, entry will be at discretion of the Principal or Vice Principal.
- 4.5 Entry to college will be at the discretion of the curriculum teams at interview. Assessing suitability to Plumpton College as well as meeting grade entry criteria may also consider references, conduct, attendance and performance in the applicant's most recent educational setting or workplace.
- 4.4 Where an applicant does not have any formal qualifications in English and mathematics, the student is enrolled on a stepping stone qualification and given the opportunity to fast-track to GCSE in October and December.

#### **5. Reservations**

- 5.1 The application and admissions process will be simple and straightforward for most applicants. However, for some applicants, additional information may be required and this may affect the College's decision on whether to offer a place. The College aims to reserve the right to:
- refuse admission to an applicant who has previously been excluded from this or any other educational institution. Applicants previously excluded will be interviewed by a member of the Senior Management Team prior to acceptance
  - review and refuse admission for applicants where there is evidence that they may be a threat or danger to themselves or others or will disrupt the learning of others. Where such applicants are offered a place on a course, the College will ensure it puts in place appropriate risk assessments to manage any identified risk/s and ensure the relevant support is put in place

- review and refuse admission to an applicant/learner who has any outstanding debt to the College, until it's cleared in full
- make changes and cancel any course or offer without notice should this be necessary. In such cases the College will make every effort to find alternative provision
- seek further detail from applicants who declare a criminal conviction on an application form and hold their application for consideration by the Deputy Principal and the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the College Criminal Conviction Procedure
- reject any application or later terminate registration from an individual who is subsequently found to have omitted or falsified information in relation to his/her application
- decline to accept a student who requires High Needs Support where the Local Authority has not provided assurance of paying associated cost of the support required within the applicants Educational Health and Care Plan

## **6. Application procedures**

### **6.1 Full time Further Education courses**

6.1.1 Applicants for all full time Further Education courses should complete the online College application.

6.1.2 Applicants from schools that are part of eProspectus should apply through the eProspectus administrative system on the associated website <https://careerseastsussex.co.uk/login>.

6.1.3 Priority Applications

Applications received by the 31<sup>st</sup> January each year will be considered as a priority application.

Applications will be processed and priority interview date offered within 10 working days.

Applications can be received after this time and should be received by the college before 31<sup>st</sup> March. The applications received at this time will not be guaranteed a place on the first choice course selected. If a student's first choice is not available the student will be offered Advice and Guidance to find another suitable course. For all applications received by 31 March interviews and courses offers will be made by 3 July 2023.

6.1.4 Late Applications

Applications received after the 31 March will be considered as a late application. The following will apply:

- Application process may be delayed due to exams/summer break.
- In some cases this may mean that interview and course offers will not be completed until late August/ early September.
- New starter events may be missed.
- No guarantee can be made that places will still be available on chosen course.

6.1.5 Applicants will be required to attend an information/interview session. The interview session will either be conducted on site or remotely. Where it is deemed necessary an applicant may be invited to a second interview with the Inclusive Learning & Development Team.

- 6.1.6 The Enquiries, Advice and Guidance Team will email details regarding the booking of these sessions within 10 working days of receiving an application.
- 6.1.7 Where an applicant does not have any formal qualifications in English and mathematics, the student is enrolled on a stepping stone qualification and given the opportunity to fast-track to GCSE in October and December.
- 6.1.8 Where applicants are invited to an information/interview session the purpose is to:
- Enable tutors to decide on the applicant's ability to complete the course successfully, establish motivations, ability, appropriateness and suitability for joining their chosen course and explain alternatives if appropriate.
  - Enable prospective students to gain an understanding of the course they are interested in and to form a view on how it will meet their requirements.
  - Enable tutors/support staff to provide more detailed information about the course and facilities including residential accommodation and bursary scheme (if relevant).
  - Enable the Learning Support team to assess any learning support requirements.
- 6.1.9 An offer will be made at the end of an interview by the tutor (and Inclusive Learning and Development staff member if relevant) who will make one of the following recommendations:
- Offer an unconditional offer
  - Offer a conditional place
  - Offer an alternative course
  - Unable to make an offer – referral to the Enquiries, Advice and Guidance for IAG
  - Offer on Hold – further investigation may need to be made (e.g. Waiting for an Educational Health Care Plan or Criminal Conviction details)
- 6.1.11 Conditional offers will usually be given to full time-applicants. Conditions will vary between the courses but will normally include the following:
- Meet entry criteria
  - Provide at least 1 supportive reference
  - Actively take part in keep-warm events i.e. Taster Days, Student Welcome Days
  - If an applicant is eligible for an Educational Health and Care Plan, we cannot confirm an offer of a place until funding from the relevant local authority has been confirmed
- 6.1.12 Formal offer email will be sent from the Enquiries, Advice and Guidance Team usually within 48 hours of the interview taking place. The email will include conditions if there are any, next steps and any acceptance instructions.
- 6.1.13 Places should not be considered 'secured' until acceptance of the offer is confirmed by the applicant.
- 6.1.14 Applications for residency should be made to the Student Services Team via the College website. Reference and information regarding residential stay is given during the information/interview session and on offer letters. Applications for residency cannot be confirmed until the course acceptance has been received.

## **6.2 Part-time courses**

- 6.2.1 Applicants for funded part-time courses should complete the online College application form.
- 6.2.2 Applications are processed by the Enquiries, Advice and Guidance Team who will send a receipt of application.
- 6.2.3 Applicants will be invited to attend an interview if required.
- 6.2.4 An offer will be made by the tutor following interview or application review, who will make one of the following recommendations:
- Offer an unconditional offer
  - Offer a conditional place
  - Offer an alternative course
- 6.2.5 If an offer is conditional, places are not deemed 'secure' until the applicant has met the conditions or payment terms of the course.
- 6.2.6 Once an applicant is accepted, enrolment details are sent via email.

## **6.3 Full cost courses**

- 6.3 Full cost courses can be booked and paid for via the College on-line shop without having to follow the process above.

## **6.4 Apprenticeships**

- 6.4.1 Applicants with an employer should contact the Business Services team on 01273 892127. Details will be taken and contact made with the employer to qualify the application. Once confirmed by the employer the college's apprenticeship application form will be emailed to the employer and potential apprentice for completion and returned to begin the onboarding process (ensuring the desired apprenticeship programme is the most appropriate).
- 6.4.2 Applicants who do not already have an employer will receive IAG from the Careers Leader and/or directed by the Business Service team to the college website for information on current apprenticeship vacancies, tips on finding an employer/apprenticeship opportunity or to register with the college's Talent Bank service.
- 6.4.3 The admission procedures for an apprenticeship are as follows:
- An employer expresses an interest in recruiting an apprentice or training an existing employee via an apprenticeship scheme either by an incoming enquiry to the Business Services Team or outbound business development activity
  - Business Account Manager provides IAG on the incentives and obligations to the employer on training an employee via an apprenticeship scheme and/or information on the college's Apprenticeship Recruitment Service as well as relevant information the most appropriate college offered apprenticeship programme.
  - If an employer is looking to recruit the college will work with them to produce a vacancy advert based on their available job role which will be advertised on the government's 'Recruit An Apprentice' website, the college's apprenticeship vacancy page, certain external job boards e.g Indeed, the college's social media channels and directly to potential applicants who are registered with the college's Talent Bank service.

- Applications are either received via the different recruitment channels or directly to the recruiting employer depending on their choice. The college will support shortlisting based on key evidential criteria (e.g academic grades) if requested.
- The employer completes shortlisting of applicants and conducts interviews etc based on their standard business recruitment process. Once an applicant has been identified then a provisional offer of employment will be given based on the applicant completing the college's apprenticeship onboarding process. If the employer has not found a suitable candidate they will either withdraw the apprenticeship opportunity or extend the recruitment window.
- The successful applicant and/or the existing employee will be required to complete the college's apprenticeship onboarding process to ensure that they are eligible and the identified apprenticeship programme is the most appropriate. The onboarding process consists of the completion of the apprenticeship application form, the applicant to undertake an online maths and English assessment, a professional discussion with the relevant apprenticeship delivery team to identify the applicant's existing skills and knowledge, submission of evidence of prior attainment and personal identification.

6.4.4 On successful completion of the onboarding process the relevant apprenticeship delivery team will complete the apprenticeship enrolment paperwork/pack with the employer and their apprentice and first day of learning is set. If unsuccessful, appropriate advice and guidance will be provide for an alternative programme of study or level e.g sign post to level 1-2 functional skills classes.

## **6.5 Higher Education**

- 6.5.1 Applicants for full time undergraduate Higher Education programmes must complete the UCAS Application Form on-line in accordance with UCAS guidelines ([www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com))
- 6.5.2 Applicants for part time or postgraduate Higher Education programmes should apply via the College application form online.
- 6.5.3 Applicants for the Foundation Degree in Veterinary Nursing or Veterinary Physio will need to complete additional assessments in addition to an interview.
- 6.5.4 In some cases, decisions will be made without interview taking into consideration previous qualifications and supporting statements.
- 6.5.5 The applicant will be notified by email of the outcome of the interview/decision within 5 working days of the interview or within 18 working days of the application received (for those with no interview). If the applicant is accepted onto the course, a conditional or unconditional offer is placed via the UCAS Track website (for full time undergraduate applications) and /or an email offer from the College.
- 6.5.6 Applicants must note that full time study is not compatible with full time work. However, the College recognises that many students may wish to combine their studies with part-time work, including voluntary work. Work commitments will not normally be accepted as a reason for a student not being able to meet their academic commitments.
- 6.5.7 Plumpton College degrees are validated by the Royal Agricultural University (RAU). The Academic Regulations of the RAU apply to all students studying for a degree at the College.

## **6.6 14-16 Provision (School day release)**



- 6.6.1 Applications for all applicants of compulsory school age who are on school roll must be made directly from the school. No application will be accepted directly from the student or parent.
- 6.6.2 A statement from the head teacher or head of year agreeing to fund the cost of tuition must be received from the school prior to enrolment.
- 6.6.3 Applicants must be 14 years of age or older by 31<sup>st</sup> August to qualify.
- 6.6.4 All applications will be screened by the Enquiries, Advice and Guidance team and 14+ teams to ensure that the correct consent and agreements are in place with the relevant school.
- 6.6.5 Schools will be required to disclose and discuss all concerns regarding their students with the 14-16 team prior to a student attending.
- 6.6.6 Applicants may be invited to attend Summer Events in order to familiarise themselves with the college and expectations.
- 6.6.7 Provision for any additional support requirements must be supplied by the participating school and confirmation must be provided by the school.
- 6.6.8 All correspondence will be sent via the designated lead/contact at the School.
- 6.6.9 Secondary Schools that agree to release students to attend day provision will be invoiced the agreed rate.
- 6.6.10 A service level agreement must be agreed and signed between the College and participating School before learners can be enrolled.

#### **6.7 14-16 Provision (Electively Home Educated)**

- 6.7.1 Applicants under 16 years old and who are of compulsory school age that are electively Home Educated must produce evidence that their parent/guardian agree to them studying at the College in the form of a letter. Applicants must be 14 years of age or older by 31<sup>st</sup> August to qualify.
- 6.7.2 All applications will be screened by the Enquiries, Advice and Guidance team and 14+ teams to ensure that the correct consent and agreements are in place with Parent/guardians.
- 6.7.3 Learners applying for the Electively Home Educated courses must provide evidence of being withdrawn from the state educational system for a minimum of six months.
- 6.7.4 Home educated learners will be enrolled on Government funded course(s) and will be required to comply with the relevant regulations in force at the time of enrolment.
- 6.7.5 Applications and Offers made will not be made on a first come first served basis, an applicant's commitment to the courses available at Plumpton College will be taken into consideration. Applications made by the 31 January will be taken into consideration. Applications made after this date will only be considered if there are still places available on the required courses.
- 6.7.6 Applicants will receive an interview and a place will be offered if a student is deemed to have the skills and understanding necessary to complete a programme of study. A conditional offer will be made and the student may take up their place only once the conditions of the offer are

fulfilled. The college reserves the right to remove a student from the intake list if the conditions are not met.

- 6.7.7 Students will be required to provide reference from other providers such as personal tutors, previous schools or clubs attend to support their application.
- 6.7.8 New students will be required to attend assessment sessions in the summer term and these will form part of the condition of offer. The sessions will determine a student's ability to cope with the college environment and confirm the level of study required for English and Maths. An offer maybe withdrawn at this time if the college assessment confirms the student would not be able to successfully undertake a programme of study.

## **7. Exceptional Entry**

- 7.1 In exceptional circumstances a Curriculum Manager or Vice Principal can authorise exceptional entry onto a programme of study if the applicant has not fulfilled all the entry criteria for a programme of study.

## **8. Tuition Fees and Financial Support**

- 8.1 Where a tuition fee is payable, entry to a course can only be confirmed once the fee (or the deposit of an agreed payment plan) has been paid in full. Please refer to the Fees Policy for further information.
- 8.2 Where an applicant has applied for a course that is eligible for an Advanced Learning Loan (applicants aged 19+ only) the Learning and Funding Information letter will be sent to the applicant to inform them of their options. For applicants that choose to fund a course through an Advanced Learning Loan evidence will be required to prove application and or acceptance before enrolment can be completed.
- 8.3 Where a HE applicant has applied for a Student Loan via Student Finance England evidence will be required to prove application and or acceptance before enrolment can be completed.
- 8.4 Information and Guidance is offered throughout the admissions process to signpost and inform the applicant about financial support that may be available. This includes Bursaries, discounted travel, loans (Higher Education and Advanced Learning Loan) and charitable trusts.
- 8.5 Where the applicant owes the College money all debts must be paid in full before an applicant can be admitted onto another course or progress to the next year of study.
- 8.6 Attendance on a course will be denied if the fee remains unpaid.

A copy of the full Plumpton College Fees Policy can be found on the Plumpton College website.

## **9. Inclusive Learning and Development**

- 9.1 The College welcomes applications from applicants who declare a disability or support requirement.

- 9.2 Staff from the Inclusive Learning and Development Team will be available during the admissions process to help with advice and guidance and can provide an interview to applicants that identify themselves as requiring support with learning at application.
- 9.3 Decisions on suitability for a course will be made on academic competence. The College will consider any reasonable adjustment at an individual level to ensure that appropriate support is provided for applicants.
- 9.4 If an applicant is eligible for an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP), we cannot confirm an offer of a place until Plumpton College has been consulted by the relevant Local authority. A 'Conditional' offer is not confirmation of a place on a study programme until a consultation has been received from the Local Authority, processed and Plumpton College has agreed to be the named provider on the student's EHCP.
- 9.5 Applicants with an Educational Health and Care Plan must provide an up to date copy of their plan with their application.

## **10. International students**

- 10.1 The College welcomes enquires from international applicants.
- 10.2 Applicants for full time undergraduate Higher Education courses must complete the UCAS Application Form on-line in accordance with UCAS guidelines ([www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com))
- 10.3 Applicants for postgraduate Higher Education courses should apply via the College application form.
- 10.4 Applicants requiring a Student visa to study in the UK will be contacted by the Enquiries Advice and Guidance Team to discuss the application process – please refer to the Student Visa – Student Guide: [Student visa : Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk).
- 10.5 International students for whom English is not their first language must provide evidence of English language competence such as an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) qualification. Undergraduate courses require a minimum IELTS score of 6.0 overall with no element less than 5.5. Postgraduate courses require a minimum IELTS score of 6.5 overall with no element less than 6.0.

## **11. Course closure**

- 11.1 If a course becomes over-subscribed or is cancelled, applicants will be notified and offered an alternative programme where available or offered the opportunity to be entered onto a course waiting list. Where an appropriate alternative is not available then an advice and guidance consultation will be offered to provide guidance.
- 11.2 For Higher Education courses, the College, in collaboration with its validating partner, reserves the right to make variations to programme contents, entry requirements and methods of delivery, and to discontinue, merge or combine programmes, both before and after a student's admission, if such action is reasonably considered necessary. In the event that, prior to the student commencing their studies, the College discontinues the programme, the student may either withdraw from the College without any liability for fees, or transfer to another programme offered by the College, for which the student is qualified. If in these circumstances

the student wishes to withdraw and to enrol on a course elsewhere, the College shall use its reasonable endeavours to assist the student.

## **12. Appeals**

12.1 Applicants who want to appeal against a decision made at any stage of the admissions process should do so in writing (either letter or email) indicating the grounds and particulars on which the appeal is based to the Enquiries Advice and Guidance Manager within 10 working days from the decision being communicated.

All evidence will be gathered and considered by a panel consisting of the Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality) or the Vice Principal (Student Support), Enquiries, Advice and Guidance Manager and relevant Curriculum Manager.

Notification of any outcome will be confirmed in a letter as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 20 working days. This decision will be final.