

**Policy on**

**Higher Education Admissions**

**Approved on**

**October 2019**

**Approved by**

**Academic Policy Review Group**

Policy Title	Higher Education Admissions
Document Owner	Head of Higher Education

Policy Effective From	October 2019
Next Review Date	October 2024
Version 2	January 2022 includes document update to formatting, typefaces and branding, and additional information in section 3c and document links added to section 10.

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored annually and reviewed every five years in light of experience and best practice. This mechanism recognises that changes to legislation may prompt a review of the policy before the five years stipulated.

New College Durham is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, as well as vulnerable adults, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

This Policy applies to all activity undertaken by the College in pursuing its purpose as an educational institution whilst serving its students, community and wider stakeholder interests.

If you require this document in an alternative format and/or language, please contact [records@newdur.ac.uk](mailto:records@newdur.ac.uk)

We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. All policies are subject to equality impact assessments, which are carried out to determine whether the policy has, or is likely to have, a different impact on those with protected characteristics.

We are always keen to hear from anyone who wants to contribute to these impact assessments and we welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility of fairness of this and all College policies.

To make suggestions or to see further information please contact:

### **Policy Author**

Head of Higher Education

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Curriculum and Quality Directorate

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### **Equality Impact Assessment**

A statement confirming that the policy has been subjected to a rigorous assessment for any potential impact on the full range of stakeholders with those impacts being assessed and considered and, where appropriate, suitable adjustments to the policy have been included prior to the adoption of the policy.

### **Footnote**

In an effort to keep costs to a minimum, a conscious decision has been made not to print out this document and it would be appreciated that you refer to the copy and relevant Appendices available on the Intranet.

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## 1. Rationale

The reason for the development of this policy is derived from the College's commitment to demonstrating sound practice in recruitment, selection and admission of students to higher education courses offered by the College. The admissions process extends from pre-application stage up to and including enrolment and is crucial to establishing a positive relationship between applicants and the College. The College is committed to meeting the needs of all potential students wishing to undertake higher education studies at the College. This commitment is a key focus of the College's Vision and Values.

This policy and the procedure attached have been developed with regard to the regulatory objectives of the Office for Students (OfS), the quality agenda and requirements presented by the Review of Higher Education, and are underpinned by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) UK Quality Code Advice and Guidance: 'Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access'. In addition, guidance produced by Supporting Professionalism in Admissions (SPA) has been used to support the development of this policy and the associated procedure.

## 2. Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure an effective, efficient, centralised and coordinated admissions process for all applicants wishing to study towards a higher education award at the College.

In order to fulfil the stated aim of the policy, the College has established the following objectives which are to:

- a. ensure that applicants are treated fairly and impartially;
- b. ensure that applicants are appropriately guided and supported through the admissions process;
- c. ensure that informed and sound decision making by the applicants and the College is assured;
- d. ensure that national, regional and College strategic objectives are recognised and considered;
- e. ensure that information relating to entry criteria is up-to-date, accurate and accessible to applicants and College staff.

### 3. Applicant Entitlements

Under the terms of this policy and with alignment to the first primary regulatory objective of the OfS, all students from all backgrounds, and with the ability and desire to undertake higher education, are supported to access, succeed in and progress from, higher education.

All applicants at the College are entitled to:

- a. have access to information, promotional materials and activities which are accurate (at the time of publishing), relevant, current, accessible and information that will enable them to make informed decisions about their options. The OfS will work collaboratively with students to ensure that the information, advice and guidance that is offered, and the way that it is provided, is continually adapted to support students to make the right higher education choices for them);
- b. receive confidential and impartial advice and guidance;
- c. have access to clear and detailed information about the selection process that is used for the course(s) they are applying to, including being provided with access to information in relation to terms and conditions and disclosure of criminal convictions;
- d. information regarding learning or support needs in advance of enrolment;
- e. have made available to them prior to the commencement of their period of study, details of the RPL regulations and process that apply to their programme of study where opportunities are identified;
- f. expect that the selection process is followed consistently and fairly and that transparent entry requirements, both academic and non-academic, are used to underpin judgements made during the selection process;
- g. be informed by the College, of the obligations placed on them at the time the offer of a place is made;
- h. be informed, at the earliest opportunity, of any significant changes to a course made between the time an offer is made and enrolment is completed, and that they are advised of the options available in the circumstances;
- i. have explained to them, once the place is accepted, the arrangements for enrolment, induction and orientation of new students;

- j. expect induction and orientation arrangements which promote the efficient and effective integration of entrants as students;
- k. be provided with feedback as to why they were not successful in gaining a place, if requested.

#### 4. Applicant Responsibilities

This policy requires applicants to fully acknowledge and actively engage in fulfilling their responsibilities by:

- a. familiarising themselves with the admissions process relevant to the course they are applying for;
- b. adhering to College procedures associated with the admissions process relevant to the course they are applying for;
- c. ensuring that at each stage of the application process, they provide honest and accurate information and communicate timely any changes to circumstances which could have a bearing on admission decisions;
- d. declaring any additional support needs they may have;
- e. adhering to the obligations placed upon them at the time the offer of a place is made;
- f. confirming acceptance or refusal of a place within the agreed time limits;
- g. engaging fully with the induction and orientation activities delivered at the College;
- h. ensuring that at each stage of the application and appeal process, they provide honest and accurate information and communicate timely any changes to circumstances which could have a bearing on admission decisions;
- i. ensuring they declare any learning difficulty/disability and/or support need at the earliest stage possible within their application journey, or when the need becomes apparent.

#### 5. Teaching Staff Responsibilities

The policy requires teaching and support staff to ensure that:

- a. promotional materials and recruitment activities provide accurate information about the course that will enable an applicant to make informed decisions about their options;
- b. they deal promptly with applications in accordance with College procedures and guidelines;

- c. they provide accurate and detailed information to prospective applicants about the admissions procedure for their course;
- d. teaching staff enquire about any additional support needs potential students may require;
- e. the selection process is followed consistently and fairly and that transparent entry requirements, both academic and non-academic, are used to underpin judgements made during the selection process;
- f. they inform an applicant of the obligations placed on them at the time the offer of a place is made;
- g. they inform applicants, at the earliest opportunity, of any significant changes to a course made between the time the offer of a place is made and registration is completed, and that they are advised of the options available in the circumstances;
- h. once an applicant has accepted a place, they are provided with information about the arrangements for enrolment, registration, induction and orientation to the College and the course;
- i. where requested, they provide feedback to an applicant who has not been offered a place on the reason why they were unsuccessful;
- j. all applicants are given the opportunity to declare any learning difficulty/disability and/or support need at every stage of their application.



## 6. College Management Responsibilities

College Management should ensure that:

- a. all staff involved in the admissions procedure are fully conversant with this policy and the demands it places upon them;
- b. staff development is made available to staff to support them in implementing this policy and to understand the procedures which underpin the policy;
- c. the policy is implemented consistently;
- d. all courses have accurate, relevant and current admissions strategies and that these are accessible and provide information that will enable an applicant to make informed decisions about their options.

## 7. Higher Education Admissions Appeal

The College has a policy and associated procedure for any applicant to a higher education programme who wishes to appeal against an admissions decision that has been made by the College. This includes where an applicant wishes to appeals against a decision involving Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

The College will ensure that all staff involved with admissions are familiar with the Admissions Appeal policy and Admissions Appeal procedure.

## 8. Standards by which the Success of this Policy can be Evaluated

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

- a. positive feedback from applicants on the effectiveness of the policy and procedure through internal and external surveys including the annual National Student Survey(NSS);
- b. positive feedback from staff on the effectiveness of the policy and procedure;
- c. positive feedback received from awarding bodies and from external review activities.

## 9. Responsibility for Implementing this Policy

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

- a. the Vice Principals and Heads of School are responsible for overseeing the implementation of sections 4, 6 & 7;
- b. Curriculum Managers & Course Leaders are responsible for ensuring that course teams collaboratively address the requirements of this policy;
- c. teaching staff are responsible for meeting their responsibilities as described in sections 4, & 6.

## 10. Associated Documentation

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following supporting/related documentation:

- Equality Impact Assessment (See Appendices)
- Policy Development Request (See Appendices)
- HE Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):
- Academic Regulations for the Award of Foundation Degrees: Section E Regulatory Principles Governing Recruitment and Admission to Programmes:  
[Section E.pdf \(newdur.ac.uk\)](#)
- Higher Education Admissions Appeals:  
[HE Admissions Appeals Policy \(newcollegedurham.ac.uk\)](#)

## Appendices

## Equality Impact Assessment Record

New College Durham actively promotes the basic British values of democracy, the rules of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs.

<b>1. Department/School:</b>	HEDQU
<b>2. People carrying out the assessment:</b>	Lesley Collinson
<b>3. Policy/procedure being assessed:</b>	Admissions Policy (HE)
<b>4. Main aims of the policy/procedure:</b>  The specific aim of the policy is to ensure accurate, fit for purpose and trustworthy information about the College and the higher education it provides, is available to identified stakeholders. Stakeholders include prospective and current higher/further education students, external organisations, partner organisations and government agencies.	
<b>5. What examples of current good practice are there relating to the protected characteristics?</b>  a. Information presented in a variety of durable, accessible formats cognisant of the needs of people with protected characteristics.  b. On-going scrutiny of published materials to ensure that all salient information is accessible to all stakeholders.  c. Producers of information will take account of the need to communicate unambiguously and clearly to all.	

Cont'd...

**6. For which of the protected characteristics could there be a negative impact?**

Please Tick

☒

Age

☒

Disability

☒

Gender Re-assignment

☒

Marriage and Civil Partnership

☒

Pregnancy and Maternity

☒

Race

☒

Religion or Belief

☒

Sex

☒

Sexual Orientation

☒

**7. Describe that impact**

There would be no impact to the applicant. The policy ensures transparency, fairness and reliability.

**8. What action needs to be taken to remove the impact?**

N/A

**9. Who will implement the action plan?**


N/A

**10. By when?**

N/A

**11. Monitoring Process**

This will be reviewed when the policy is reviewed.

<b>Completed by:</b> Lesley Collinson	<b>Endorsed by:</b> Emma Crosskey
<b>Signature:</b> Lesley Collinson	<b>Signature:</b> 
<b>Printed Name:</b> Lesley Collinson	<b>Printed Name:</b> Emma Crosskey
<b>Role:</b> HE Quality Manager	<b>Role:</b> Deputy ASC Manager
<b>Date:</b> 29 April 2019	<b>Date:</b> 2 October 2019
<b>Date for Review:</b> 2 October 2024	

## Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Please complete the following Action Plan, based on the actions you have identified above, particularly in Section 8.

<b>Department/School:</b>	
<b>Policy Assessed:</b>	

Issues identified	Changes Required <small>Mark with an asterisk (*) any changes that may be generic to other functions</small>	Resource Implications	Responsibility for Implementation	Timescale	Progress Update

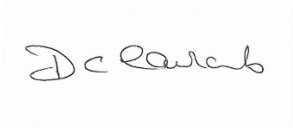
Once completed, this should be e-mailed to Christine Padgett ([christine.padgett@newdur.ac.uk](mailto:christine.padgett@newdur.ac.uk)) and a copy retained by the author.

Please note the policy author is responsible for completion of this action plan.

## Appendix C

Policy Review/Development Request		Date of Request:	29.04.19
Proposed or current title of Policy: Admissions (HE)			
Is this a proposed new policy or a review of an existing policy: <i>(please tick whichever is appropriate)</i>	Proposed new Policy:		Review of an existing Policy:
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Due date for Submission:		Due date for Review:
			April 2019
<b>Rationale:</b> <i>Please identify the drivers of the review/development of the stated policy</i> <b>Review date is due, policy needs updating owing to the revised UK quality codes</b>			
<b>Consultation</b> ( <i>Where appropriate</i> )			
Forum/Meeting/Group: • N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Date of Meeting(s): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Key points emerging from the consultation exercise: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Review/Development undertaken by:	Name: L Collinson	Signed: Lesley Collinson	Date submitted to APRG: 29.04.19



Approval Body Use only, <i>(once completed in full please return to the APRG Chair)</i>				
Approval Body Title: Academic Policy Review Group				
Policy Approved – <i>(Please delete appropriately)</i>	If no please specify the nature of the issue(s):		Chair: Dawn Fairlamb	Date: 7 October 2019
Yes			Signature: 	
APRG Chair's Actions:				
Date notifying Policy/Procedure Author of approval:	Date sent to IT Services for upload to Intranet:	Date Intranet checked to ensure correct and timely upload:	Final sign off by Chair of APRG <i>(is fully satisfied that the policy, any accompanying procedure and EIA are fully completed)</i>	
7 October 2019	7 October 2019	8 October 2019	Date: 7 October 2019	Signature: 