

# Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy

## **Document Summary**

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## **1: Introduction**

The aims of the Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy are to ensure that:

- a wide range of flexible educational and training opportunities are available; designed to meet the needs of the community, both local and elsewhere
- opportunities to access and progress to higher level study are developed in line with market demand and higher education guidelines
- adult learners have equitable and equal access to higher education
- a suitable learning environment is provided for all students
- the five 'Schwartz principles' are observed to produce a fair admissions system. The 'Schwartz principles,' state that a fair admissions system should:
  1. be transparent
  2. enable institutions to select students who are able to complete the course, as judged by their achievements and their potential
  3. strive to use assessment methods that are reliable and valid
  4. seek to minimise barriers for applicants
  5. be professional in every aspect and underpinned by appropriate institutional structures and processes.

## **2: Widening participation**

The College is committed to widening participation and encourages applications from groups of people who are known to be disadvantaged by traditional selection mechanisms. It is proactive in engaging with community groups in order to encourage participation and raise aspirations. It is keen to identify alternative methods for demonstrating an ability to meet selection criteria.

The College's Student Recruitment Policy is compliant with all appropriate legislation. It also considers National guidelines governing the recruitment and admission of students (for example the Quality Assurance Agency Quality Code) and requirements laid down by awarding bodies (such as proof of English for all applicants enrolling on BTEC Higher National Diplomas or work placements for some study programmes).

## **3: Aims of Selection:**

The aim is to attract and retain students, from a wide and diverse community, who have the potential to complete their programme of study successfully and benefit from the experience.

The College is committed to transparency in its admissions procedures. All applicable selection criteria are published on the website of The City College.

Selection is based primarily on academic criteria and therefore no candidate should be excluded from entry to a programme by reason for religious belief, political opinion, racial

group, gender, age marital status, sexual orientation, disability or responsibility for dependents.

#### **4: Selection Criteria:**

The admissions criteria will consider institutional policy, national guidelines and relevant legislation. Selection criteria are reviewed regularly in order to ensure their ongoing relevance to developing curricula and teaching and learning practice. Evidence is gathered through a variety of means including literacy and numeracy tests where required (either on site or online), interviews, references or the assessment of previous employment experience or academic work.

This policy should be read alongside the Access and Participation Statement, Admissions Appeals and Complaints Procedure, Equality and Diversity Policy, Privacy Policy, and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy.

#### **5: Communication during the application process**

All applicants are asked to inform the College about disabilities, specific learning differences (SpLD), long term medical conditions or mental health issues at the start of their course in order to discuss the support which may be required.

Applicants who disclose a need for further support are assured that the information provided will be treated with sensitivity and in accordance with the College's Data Protection Policy.

If an applicant sits the literacy/numeracy test (or does so online) and informs us that they have a specific learning difference, such as dyslexia, but cannot provide evidence, we will, at our discretion, allow the applicant reasonable adjustments, extra time and/or a separate room. We will also consider any other requests for special needs or disability requirements at the initial testing or interview stage. The online assessments have the option for dyslexic friendly fonts, ability to change the colour and/or size of the text, or background, to make the screen as comfortable as possible for all individuals, dependent upon their requirements.

#### **6: Administration of the admission process**

All College staff involved in the admissions process have been briefed carefully on the information to cover with prospective students, during the interview process, as well as the areas of experience, qualifications, and aspiration to be explored as part of the interview.

All College staff will be careful to note the potential need to make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants. In order to facilitate applications, admissions staff may seek further information from the candidate and/or colleagues as appropriate.

### **7: Disabled students**

The College strives to have an inclusive learning environment and welcomes and encourages applications from persons with a mental or physical illness or disability. Further details are provided in section 20 below.

### **8: Admissions to Higher National Certificate (HNC) and Higher National Diploma (HND) programmes**

Applicants aged over 21 years at the start of their course and who have been out of education for at least three years are classed as 'mature students'. The prior qualifications and/ or work experience of such applicants will be reviewed by the College to consider if their individual profile shows they have the potential to achieve the qualification. If we believe it does and all other requirements of the admissions process are met, such applicants may be enrolled.

For those who have recently been in education, the entry profile is likely to include one of the following:

- A relevant BTEC Level 3 qualification
- A GCE Advanced Level profile that demonstrates strong performance in a relevant subject or adequate performance in more than one GCE subject. This profile is likely to be supported by GCSE grades A\* to C and/or 9 to 4 (or equivalent) in subjects such as Maths and English
- Other related Level 3 qualifications
- An Access to Higher Education Diploma awarded by an approved further education institution
- Related work experience
- An international equivalent of the above.

Applications are made either directly to the College or through an educational consultant. All applications are treated the same regardless of their origin. Deadlines for courses are determined by the College.

All applicants with sufficient entry qualifications are then invited to take a literacy and numeracy test and must demonstrate their proficiency in English at level 2 (minimum). An oral presentation if given during the interview to check spoken English.

Non-native English speakers (not born in the UK) who have not undertaken their final two years of schooling in English, must demonstrate capability in English at Level 2 (or equivalent) before being admitted to the programme. Equivalent grades to Level 2 include CEFR B2, PTE 51, and IELTS 5.5 (reading and writing must be at 5.5). After gaining admittance, such students are still encouraged to enrol on a Level 2 English course because it should still help with their HND study, career development or further study.

If an applicant fails the literacy, or numeracy, test, they may be able to re-sit.

All applicants, and/or their educational consultant (where applicable), will be informed, whether they are invited for either a re-test, or an interview, normally within 48 hours.

### **9: Admissions to the Award in Education and Training (AET) and Diploma in Education and Training (DET) programmes**

The College's policy on access to this qualification is aligned with that of Pearson, the awarding body:

- they should be available to everyone who is capable of reaching the required standards
- they should be free from any barriers that restrict access and progression
- there should be equal opportunities for all those wishing to access the qualifications.

The College is required to recruit learners to this qualification with integrity and to demonstrate good practice in the use of initial assessment and learning needs analysis. The College will review the applicant's prior qualifications and/or experience, considering whether this profile shows that they have the potential to achieve the qualification. Applicants will be provided with relevant information and advice to make sure the qualification meets their needs.

Those wishing to join this qualification programme will undertake an interview and initial assessment of skills in English and mathematics.

For learners with disabilities and specific needs, the assessment of their potential to achieve the qualification will identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to them during delivery and assessment of the qualification. Please see the Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy for further details.

Please note that all AET and DET students must be able to meet the requirement for 100 hours of teaching practice plus the requirement for observation and assessment of performance and must realise that, without this, it is impossible to achieve successful completion of the Diploma in Education and Training.

All applicants are therefore expected to find suitable employment to match their career intentions (e.g., teaching in secondary/ FE etc) in order to be enrolled. The work may be paid or unpaid. The college may agree to provide unpaid employment for suitable candidates intending to teach in the higher education (HE) sector.

In order to work in the education sector, students may require Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance and they will be responsible for arranging this. Students will not get DBS clearance if they have a criminal record and so are unlikely to get employment in the education sector now or in the future. Applicants are asked to declare all criminal convictions to the college otherwise they cannot be advised properly.

### **10: Admissions for Acupuncture and Tui na programmes**

The entry profile of an applicant gaining admission to the Acupuncture or Tui Na programmes normally includes:

- Five GCSE qualifications including English Language at grade C (minimum)
- A/ AS level qualifications totalling 120 UCAS points

Applicants to the Tui Na programme have normally completed an Acupuncture programme previously.

In addition, applicants are required to submit a 400-500-word personal statement detailing why the applicant would like to study at The City College of Acupuncture

However, the prior qualifications and/ or work experience of 'mature' applicants will be reviewed by the College to consider if their individual profile shows they have the potential to achieve the qualification. If we believe it does and all other requirements of the admissions process are met, such applicants may be enrolled.

Applicants meeting these requirements will be invited for an interview that assesses a variety of key features, including, for example, commitment, life experience, empathy, compassion and people skills. Career changers will have the opportunity to demonstrate appropriate life experience or interests that they have built on in place of academic qualifications.

The interview focusses on application details and highlights the requirements of the programme. There are four principal aspects:

- **Commitment:** The applicant must be clear that studying any form of Chinese Medicine takes commitment. In order to be accepted onto the programme, the applicant must fully understand and agree with the demands of the programme
- **Requirements:** To be accepted onto a British Accreditation Acupuncture Board (BAAB) accredited programme, we may only take people onto the programme who we believe have a reasonable chance of becoming a practitioner
- **Practical Skills:** Acupuncture and Tui na are practical skills and applicants wishing to acquire these skills must be willing to participate by also being a model and working with other students

- Reflectivity and aptitude: Students training to become therapists will need to be willing and able to engage in self-reflection.

The emphasis on life experience that these criteria display has developed from our experience of students on other courses and our evaluations. Thus the College recognises fully the diversity of wider profiles of experience that may offer special relevance to future work, performance and professional success of its graduates. The College further supports all its mature students through regular and careful performance reviews and by means of effective tutorial guidance that we believe our smaller college is particularly well-equipped to deliver.

### **11: Interviews and offers**

Applicants who are asked to attend an interview are seen by a member of staff who has been briefed and trained in interviewing prospective students. All interviewers use an Interview checklist to ensure consistency across different interviewers. Interviewers will make notes during the interview (and immediately afterwards) and all applications will be discussed between at least two members of staff to reach one of the following decisions:

- To make an offer of a place on the applicant's chosen course
- To reject the application but offer a place on an alternative course. The reasons for rejection and offering another course will be detailed in a letter to the applicant
- To reject the application outright, communicating this decision to the applicant as appropriate.

During the Admissions procedure, the College aims to provide sufficient information about the College and course so that applicants may make an informed decision about the appropriateness of their chosen course as well as basic information on applying for a student loan where applicable. All admissions decisions are notified to the applicant, or educational consultant (where applicable) normally within 48 hours.

### **12: Fraudulent Statements.**

Admission to the College is subject to applicants disclosing all facts and information relevant to their application.

If during the course of consideration of an application, an applicant is discovered to have omitted any information requested in the instructions or the application form or made any misrepresentation(s) therein or given false information, the College reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a place and/or dismiss the application.

### **13: Appealing an Admissions Decision**

An applicant has the right to appeal where he or she feels that the decision made was wrong. In such instances, the onus of proof is on the applicant, and they will need to present additional evidence in order to force a reconsideration of his or her application. Where a

decision is overturned, an offer of a place will only be made subject to space on the course (otherwise an alternative intake will be offered). Course places will not be held pending the resolution of an appeal.

If any applicant wishes to complain about the Admissions Procedure / Outcome on the basis of being treated unfairly, he or she must make the complaint in accordance with the Admissions Appeals and Complaints procedure which is available separately.

#### **14: Applicants seeking deferred entry**

The College will consider requests from applicants for deferred entry for a maximum of 12 months. The College reserves the right to defer an applicant if it deems in the interest of the College to do this.

#### **15: Procedure for applicants disclosing a criminal record.**

Applicants are asked to declare any criminal record so they can be advised on the advisability of their chosen course. In addition, the College has the duty to ensure the safety of its student and staff community. If the College considers that any applicant could cause harm to self or others, the College has the right to not accept the applicant or to exclude a current student who poses this sort of threat.

#### **16: Data Protection.**

All staff will ensure that data use, retention and storage comply fully with the GDPR 2018.

#### **17: Student finance**

Applicants should please note:

- The fee details are included on the website which is the most up to date detail
- If students are self-financing, they are expected to pay 100% of fees before the start of each year of their course or to enter into an instalment agreement with the College at the College's discretion (this service attracts an additional fee)
- If students are financed through Student Finance England, they must be able to demonstrate that they have made an application before the start of their study programme. Proof might include any correspondence for Student Finance England showing the amount and schedule of their payment
- If students are unsure about how to go about the application process, then a member of staff will advise them.

#### **18: Availability of Information**

All the information given to prospective students at the interview stage is also available on The City College and The City College of Acupuncture websites as is an overview of the selection process.

### **19: Admissions monitoring**

The Academic Board of The City College has oversight of, and responsibility for, all matters regarding admissions and student recruitment.

### **20: Disabled Student Policy**

This document outlines our policy for supporting disabled students, which is in line with our legal obligations and general duty of care.

#### **Objectives**

As a college we have a commitment towards ensuring that a student's disability does not prove to be a barrier to accessing education.

Our general objectives are:

- As best as we are able to provide access to our physical and virtual environment.
- That our admission criteria does not discriminate or create a barrier to our programmes.
- To give all students who have a disability the option to give their consent in order to disclose their disability to lecturers and staff, whilst maintaining the highest level of confidentiality.
- To continuously support and provide assistance where necessary to disabled students.

#### **Scope**

We have to ensure that this policy complies with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010 in relation to disability and we have to ensure that we are able to recognise a student who may have a disability under the Act, such as

- Physical/mental impairment
- Substantial and long-term impairment which affects their ability to carry out normal activities
- Mental health conditions
- Learning difficulties

#### **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

As part of our legal obligation, we have to collect information concerning the recruitment, retention and development for students and this includes any disabilities they disclose. We aim to ensure that any information which is collected is correctly stored in accordance with the GDPR 2018.

We also have to ensure that we offer a supportive environment which enables students with a disability to feel they can speak to us in confidence and inform us of any protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010.

This policy is regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that we are fully compliant with any legislation, regulations and equality.

**Implementation:**

Students are kept informed about options for disabled students:

- All applicants are asked to inform the College about disabilities, long term medical conditions or mental health issues at the start of their course in order to discuss the support which may be required. If they have any statements, hospital letters, etc. they are asked to provide a copy of this for their student file.
- Applicants who disclose a disability are assured that the information provided will be treated with sensitivity and in accordance with the College's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice.
- If an applicant sitting the literacy test informs us that they have a learning disability, such as dyslexia, but does not provide evidence at this stage, we will, at our discretion, allow the applicant special consideration/reasonable adjustments. We will also consider any other requests for special needs or disability requirements at the initial testing or interview stage.

**Student Finance and Disabled Students Allowance**

When a student completes an application for Student Finance, they are asked whether they have any disabilities. If a student has any health, or educational issues, they are advised they may be able to apply for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) and/or receive special consideration/reasonable adjustments. A handout with information is given to all students at their induction and, should they require any more information, they are advised to speak to the Student Welfare Officer or the Disability Officer, for further advice.