



WEST THAMES COLLEGE

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Lead	Approved By:	Date Approved:	Next Review Date:	Where Published:
Executive Director of Finance, HR & Development	Curriculum, Quality & Student Experience Committee	4 October 2023	October 2025	Staff Intranet

Introduction

This Admissions Policy sets out what prospective students can expect when applying to study at West Thames College. It supports our vision that:

West Thames will be a vibrant college, inspiring all our learners to fulfil their dreams and ambitions. Our outstanding education and training will contribute to a prosperous and cohesive community.

The four College values of Integrity, Excellence, Equality and Respect will be demonstrated through our admissions processes that have their primary focus on the needs of applicants.

Purpose of the policy

1. To ensure that applicants are given the information, advice and guidance necessary for them to make informed choices about their future studies and go on to reach their full potential.
2. To ensure selection policies and procedures are clear, impartial and inclusive and that decisions about an applicant's suitability for a programme of study are well informed and objective.

Policy Statement

West Thames College will ensure that potential students receive high-quality information together with impartial advice and guidance, to enable them make informed choices relating to their future education and training.

Opportunities will be provided for prospective students to view the College and its facilities.

Course entry requirements, including the need for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks on some courses, will be clear, relevant and objective. They will be published in course guides and on the College website. Initial assessments and other diagnostic tools used to evaluate an applicant's suitability for a programme will be relevant, objective and free from bias.

All applications will be acknowledged and processed promptly and within the agreed timescale set out in the Admissions Guide.

Where necessary applicants will be provided with support during the application, interview and assessment process and where necessary reasonable adjustments will be made to our standard arrangements. Information about the course offer, admissions and enrolment arrangements will be available in a range of formats to meet the needs of individual students.

Applications and Offers

The following factors will be considered when determining whether to make a course offer to an applicant:

1. Whether the applicant meets the published [course entry requirements](#)
2. Whether the course represents progression for the applicant

3. Government and other official guidance on priorities and regulations
4. The outcome of initial assessments and other diagnostic processes (auditions etc.)
5. Suitability as demonstrated through the interview process
6. The quality of reference the applicant provides
7. Whether the applicant has other relevant experience
8. Previous attendance, behaviour and quality of work (if the applicant is a recent student)

Where courses are over-subscribed priority will be given:

- a. to existing students on a first come, first served basis, provided that the course represents an established progression route; then
- b. to all other applicants based on the above criteria assessed in the order shown; and
- c. on a first come, first served basis, where the quality of external applications cannot be separated based on assessment of the above criteria in the order shown.

An offer of a place on a course does not guarantee that a place will be available on the course. A place is not guaranteed until a student has been fully enrolled as a West Thames College student by the Information Centre team.

Applicants who have a complaint relating to the admissions process or the outcome of their application should follow the College complaints procedure which is available from the main reception desk and through the website.

14-16 Direct Entry

Further education colleges have been able to directly enrol 14- to 16-year-olds since September 2013. The admissions laws and the DfE Codes of Practice as they apply to maintained schools, do not apply to FE colleges. We accept applications and make admissions decisions based on our own Admissions Policy, which sets out very clearly the criteria upon which we base our admissions decisions. Admission arrangements will be published in a manner accessible to students and parents, through this document which will be available on the College website.

The College has a wealth of experience with educating pupils from age 14 derived from our history of successfully delivering part-time and full-time courses to 14- to 16-year-olds in partnership with local schools. Our 14-16 direct entry curriculum offer is for individuals wishing to study an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programme. The admissions process is fair and transparent and follows the steps outlined below.

- Prospective students are normally referred to the College through partner local authorities (LAs)
- LA referrals are all managed by the College's designated 14-16 lead
- The 14-16 lead will arrange interviews and initial assessments for all applicants to gauge suitability for the course and determine the appropriate level of study

- As with the normal admissions process for all other students, information, advice and guidance is provided to meet the needs of individuals

Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

West Thames College is committed to providing high-quality education and training that reflects the best practice in equality of opportunity. The College will encourage successful learning for all students and rewarding work for all staff by establishing a supportive and challenging environment.