



Middlesbrough  
College

# Higher Education Admissions Policy

Owner	HE Office
Version Number	1.4
Effective Date	June 2023
Date to Be Reviewed	July 2025
Page Count	9

**Contents**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION .....3**

**2.0 KEY PRINCIPLES .....3**

**3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES.....3**

**4.0 TRAINING AND SUPPORT .....4**

**5.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW .....4**

**6.0 TRANSPARENCY AND CONSISTENCY .....4**

**7.0 ENTRY CRITERIA AND SELECTION PROCESSES .....4**

**8.0 STUDENTS WITHOUT CONVENTIONAL ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS .....5**

    8.1 EXCEPTIONAL CASES.....5

**9.0 DIRECT AND DEFERRED ENTRY.....6**

**10.0 APPLICANTS WITH CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS.....6**

**11.0 FRAUDULENT APPLICATIONS .....6**

**12.0 APPLICATION PROCESSES.....6**

**13.0 INFORMING APPLICANTS .....7**

    13.1 SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS .....7

    13.2 COURSE CHANGES .....7

    13.3 UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS .....7

    13.4 ADMISSIONS APPEALS.....8

## **1.0 Introduction**

This admissions policy details the principles and processes that underpin the selection and recruitment practices for admission to all undergraduate and postgraduate courses of study delivered by Middlesbrough College. The policy is underpinned by the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 and aligns to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education advice and guidance on the Guiding Principles, Expectations and Practices for Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access.

This policy is relevant to the following:

- the general public;
- all prospective students;
- current students wishing to undertake further study;
- higher education advisers and providers.

The College welcomes applications from all people who have the potential to succeed in Higher Education and is committed to enabling students to fulfil their personal and employment potential.

## **2.0 Key principles**

The key principles of the Admissions Policy are congruent with the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) and are broadly informed by the following:

1. Policies and procedures for application, selection and admission to higher education courses are transparent and accessible.
2. Higher education providers use fair, reliable and appropriate assessment methods that enable them to select students with the potential to complete the course successfully.
3. Higher education providers reduce or remove unnecessary barriers for prospective students.
4. Information provided to prospective students for recruitment and widening access purposes supports students in making informed decisions.
5. All staff, representatives and partners engaged in the delivery of admissions, recruitment and widening access are appropriately trained and resourced.
6. Providers continually develop widening access strategies and policies in line with local and national guidance.

## **3.0 Responsibilities**

The College Management Team has the overarching responsibility for admissions and selection processes. The annual review, monitoring and enhancement of the admissions process is delegated to the Academic Board.

The Higher Education Office is responsible for ensuring that the admission processes for all higher education applicants are clear and updated regularly.

Directors of Programme or their delegated representative are responsible for ensuring that:

- appropriate admissions criteria are developed for each course, communicated to relevant College Departments and updated annually.
  
- All Admissions Tutors and other staff engaged in admissions work are:
  - aware of and support the College's Admissions Policy and associated procedures; are competent to make fair and sound judgements;
  - are aware of the College's Equal Opportunities Policy and how to obtain further advice when dealing with enquiries and applications.

All admissions criteria are subject to approval at programme validation. Any subsequent changes to admissions criteria will be subject to approval through the programme modification process.

#### **4.0 Training and Support**

All staff involved in admissions processes receive appropriate training and support.

#### **5.0 Monitoring and Review**

The Academic Board will review the College Admissions Policy annually.

#### **6.0 Transparency and Consistency**

The College is committed to providing clear, accurate and accessible information on its courses, relevant entry requirements and associated admissions procedures. The College website provides information about all course fees.

The College strives to ensure that clear, accessible information for all recruitment activities is made available with regard to academic and non-academic requirements for entry to its courses. Where additional methods of assessment (e.g., interview or portfolio submission) are used to select candidates, this will be explicitly stated for the benefit of applicants on the course pages on the College website.

All admissions decisions are recorded by the College as well as those which are maintained on the UCAS system.

The College adheres to the UCAS procedures and deadlines in the communication of decisions to all undergraduate applicants. For further information on timescales and how to apply, including how to fill out the form, please see the [Universities and Colleges Application System \(UCAS\) website](#).

#### **7.0 Entry Criteria and Selection Processes**

All applications are assessed on an individual basis and admission to the College is based on an applicant's merits and abilities. The principal academic criterion for

determining a candidate's suitability for admission is that there is a reasonable expectation that s/he will be able to fulfil the learning outcomes of the course and achieve the standard required for the award. The College will look for evidence of academic achievement as well as personal and professional experiences, where relevant, that provide an indication of ability to meet the demands and professional requirements of the course.

Entry criteria for a given course are set by the Department responsible for the course and can be accessed through the College website. Where appropriate, programmes comply with Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements for entry. For undergraduate courses, entry criteria are specified in terms of [UCAS tariff tables](#) and guidance is provided on the College website.

Entry criteria are reviewed by the Higher Education Office (HEO) annually and are updated as required. Minimum entry criteria for all courses entering clearing are deemed to be the same as those used at all other times unless a variance is specifically authorised by the (HEO). Academic judgement may be used in exceptional cases where a student is deemed capable to succeed in a course but may not necessarily meet all prescribed entry criteria. Such decisions will be subject to scrutiny by the HEO and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) requirements where appropriate to ensure consistent and transparent decision-making.

## **8.0 Students without Conventional Entry Qualifications**

Middlesbrough College welcomes applications from students who do not meet conventional entry requirements and will take into account alternative qualifications or other experience. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a generic term for the process by which Higher Education Providers recognise and, where appropriate, award credit for learning that has taken place before entry onto a programme of study. Recognition of Prior or Experiential Learning (RPEL) and Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL) provide opportunities for individuals to claim credit for knowledge and skills that they have obtained through experience, certified learning or uncertified learning, against courses of further study. Full details of Middlesbrough College's RPL policy are provided in the document: [Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) Policy](#).

### **8.1 Exceptional Cases**

If, in assessing an application, a Programme Leader (PL) has any uncertainty, the PL can forward the application to the HEO and request a meeting of the Exceptional Cases Panel (ECP). The ECP will meet as soon as possible to consider the application. In consultation with the PL, the ECP will make a judgment whether the applicant meets the published entry criteria. This decision will be communicated to the applicant within three days of the ECP meeting by the PL.

The ECP will consist of the Director of Higher Education (or their nominee), the Programme Leader and the HEO administrator who will make and keep a formal record of the ECP meeting and its outcome.

**9.0 Direct and Deferred Entry**

Applicants may be considered for entry with advanced standing to a course, depending upon credit achieved and the relevance of content from previous study. See individual courses for details. See also the College Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning.

The College is happy to consider deferred applications where prospective students request to be admitted the year after an application is made. This request may be at the application stage or after an offer has been made.

**10.0 Applicants with Criminal Convictions**

As part of its duty of care to staff and students, the College asks applicants for information about any relevant criminal convictions. A criminal conviction does not preclude an applicant from studying at the College, this will depend on the nature of the course applied for and the circumstances and background of the offence. The College will not unfairly discriminate against individuals on the basis of the information that has been disclosed. Where an applicant declares a relevant criminal conviction, the application is assessed in accordance with the College’s Policy and Procedure for handling Applications from Students or Applicants with Previous Criminal Convictions.

All applicants to a programme of study requiring students to work with children or with adults in vulnerable situations will be required to provide a satisfactory [Disclosure and Barring Service enhanced disclosure](#) at the point identified in the course entry criteria. For courses where there are PSRB requirements, such applicants may be subject to Fitness to Practice regulations.

Applicants who do not declare a criminal conviction may have their enrolment rescinded and/or be subject to College disciplinary procedures.

**11.0 Fraudulent Applications**

The College reserves the right to withdraw any offer made on the basis of an application which has been found to contain fraudulent information. If an applicant is found to have omitted key information, the offer of a place may be withdrawn. If a student has been admitted onto a course and it is discovered that they provided fraudulent information, the College has the right to terminate their studies.

**12.0 Application Processes**

The stages and timeline involved in the application and enrolment process are identified in the table below.

Stage	Responsible	Time
Interview confirmation letter	Admissions Team	10 days from receipt of application

Interview booking	Admissions Team in consultation with PL and student	Window commences 15 days from receipt of application
Offer confirmation/rejection letter	Admissions Team	10 days from confirmation of decision (provided by Programme Team)
Enrolment	Programme Team/Registry	Commences on A-levels results day

All applications for full-time first degrees, Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) and foundation degrees should be made through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). Courses are listed and applications are made through the [UCAS website](#). Students who do not wish to apply through UCAS, can make a direct application to the College, but all direct applicant information will be shared with UCAS through the Record of Prior Acceptance process.

Applications for part-time undergraduate courses are made directly to the College. Details are available on the website.

Applications for postgraduate courses are made directly to the College through the website.

Applicants wishing to discuss eligibility for a course before application should call the number provided in the course details on the website.

### **13.0 Informing Applicants**

#### **13.1 Successful Applicants**

Successful applicants will be informed via UCAS or direct communication from the College as appropriate. Information will be issued providing full details of the enrolment process.

#### **13.2 Course Changes**

If it becomes necessary to withdraw a course, this will be communicated to applicants at the earliest possible opportunity. Applicants will be given the chance to be considered for an alternative course where possible. Where this is not possible, or where an applicant does not wish to be considered for an alternative course at the College, applicants are able to request a substitute choice through UCAS. The relevant Directorate is responsible for co-ordinating the process of communicating with applicants affected by significant changes to courses. The Directorate should assist the students to identify suitable alternative courses that may be available at other institutions. If any material changes are made to a course all student-facing documentation.

#### **13.3 Unsuccessful Applicants**

Unsuccessful applicants will be informed via UCAS or direct communication from the College as appropriate. Feedback to unsuccessful applicants will be provided on request and will usually only be provided to the applicant themselves and not to any third party e.g., parent, teacher unless specific permission has been granted. Where a student has been unsuccessful, consideration for other courses will be actively undertaken by the College.

#### 13.4 Admissions Appeals

In order to safeguard the interests of prospective students, the College has established an Admissions Appeals Procedure for use when an applicant believes that their application has not been dealt with in accordance with the College's policies, principles and procedures. Prospective students who wish to appeal a decision on the grounds mentioned above can obtain a College Admissions Appeals Procedure Application Pack from the College website which details the process and timescales for appeals. All outcomes of appeal are recorded and monitored by the Higher Education Office.

Revision History		
Version	Date	Detail
1.0	September 2017	
1.1	May 2018	Document edited for clarity and to homogenise presentation. QAA URLs updated. References to HESC changed to AB. Implement URLs to College website <a href="#">HE Essential Information</a> page.
1.2	Sep 2019	Added section 8.1.
1.3	January 2022	Checked for accuracy.
1.4	June 2023	Updated reference to the UK Quality code in section 1.0. Updated reference to the UK Quality Code in section 2.0 Updated hyperlinks in section 6.0, 8.0 and 12.0 Updated references to titles in Section 7.0 and 8.1 Updated section 12.0 to include timeline of application/enrolment process and updated statement on direct full-time applicants. General updates to ensure titles are consistent and current. Correction of any typographical errors.