DOCUMENT DETAILS

Document Name:	**FE & Apprenticeship Admissions Policy**			
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Applicability	Students	X		X
	Governors	X		X
Summary	The purpose of this document is to set out the approach to admissions for Nottingham College.			

DOCUMENT CONSULTATION & APPROVAL

Consultation person / body	**Date passed**
Learning and Quality Committee	March 26

Approval body	**Date approved**
Board	March 26

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A significant negative impact has been identified in the following area and a full impact assessment / risk assessment is available.

Equality & diversity	No
GDPR	No
Health & safety	No
Safeguarding	No

Friendly version of policy available	No

POLICY CHANGES

Key updates	**Impact**	**Section reference**
Updated reference to skills white paper	NEET – supporting more inclusive pathways, improving wellbeing and supporting successful transitions into education	1.2
FE admissions	Tailored support for students with additional needs to access events and clarity around progression application equity	5.1, 5.2
Apprenticeship admissions	Clarity around the apprenticeship recruitment and enrolment process	6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5

Entry criteria	Clarity around progression for existing students	8.4
Engagement and pre-enrolment activities	Title of section changed from Taster and Meet the Team Events	9
Inclusion and support	Clarification around the guidance provided to employers to apply for grant funding for support	11.5
Risk assessment and safeguarding duty	Clarity around arrangement for safeguarding for apprentices and appeals	12.1 & 12.5
Criminal convictions	Cross referral to the location of meanings of relevant and unspent convictions	13.1
Disclosure and Barring services	Clarity around the responsibility for funding a DBS check	14.2
Course offers	Clarity around courses nearing capacity	15.3
Appeals	Clarity around accessing form and which staff member reviews the admission appeals at stage 1 and 2	19.2 & 19.3

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Nottingham College's vision is to be recognised as an outstanding provider of choice for education and skills training, with its mission to "unlock potential through learning". The college will do this through an open and transparent admissions process that considers all applicants on their individual circumstances and gives them the best possible opportunity to study with the college. Nottingham College aims to offer the broadest possible range of courses and opportunities for students of all abilities and aspirations. The underlying principle of this admissions policy is that all students choosing to apply to Nottingham College will be offered an opportunity to study with us, on the most appropriate programme for them.

1.2 Nottingham College will integrate the implications of the Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper by strengthening its admissions policy to ensure that young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) are prioritised for accessible, flexible, and personalised pathways. The long-term impacts on young people's wellbeing and employment outcomes reinforces the need for early identification, tailored support, and proactive transition planning within the admissions process. By embedding these considerations, Nottingham College can create more inclusive entry points, strengthen guidance and support mechanisms, and ensure that vulnerable young people are effectively re-engaged in education and training.

2. OBJECTIVE

2.1 This policy governs the admission or progression of individuals to the college as FE or apprenticeship students. It is applicable to all students from the UK and Islands, within the European Union (EU), Swiss citizens or European Economic Area (EEA) with a valid settled or pre-settled status documentation. The college's approach is:

- To operate a fair, open and transparent admissions process.
- To provide accurate and timely information, and impartial advice and guidance to applicants and potential applicants to enable them to make the right choices for their future.
- To build a college community that values inclusivity, diversity and the contributions of a wide range of students and apprentices.
- To have a robust admissions process to safeguard our students, staff and partners.
- To ensure that applicants are placed on the right course, at the right level for them, giving them the best chance possible to achieve and succeed.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1. Governing body

The governing body is accountable for ensuring the college has a robust and effective admissions policy and processes in place that are in accordance with statutory guidance.

3.2. College staff

All staff are responsible for ensuring that they apply the policy and processes at all times when dealing with potential applicants, progressing students and applicants.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 This policy applies to all FE applicants including full time, part time and apprenticeship programmes of all ages, who are seeking admission onto a college programme including those who are already at the college and wish to progress from one programme to another.

4.2 The college will ensure that applicants receive information and advice from the student operations, curriculum, support and recruitment teams in order to help them decide on the course of study to best suit their needs.

4.3 The college will work with other agencies such as schools, universities, employers and specialist support services to develop appropriate information sharing and referral processes and ensure that the information and advice provided to potential students and apprentices is accurate.

4.4 The college will offer applicants the opportunity to view the college and its facilities prior to the commencement of a course by holding open days, taster events or by arranged visits.

4.5 Applicants with additional support needs can access appropriate support from the college's inclusion and support team and will be given the opportunity to disclose their support needs at application, during visits and at enrolment so that their needs can be assessed at the earliest stages in the student journey. For applicants with an education health and care plan (EHCP) a suitable taster / transition plan will be put in place where appropriate to meet their individual needs.

4.6 Applicants who may need financial/bursary support to access college programmes are given the opportunity to apply during the admissions process, and before they enrol, in order to ensure financial eligibility is assessed and packages agreed as early as possible in their studies.

4.7 Adult applicants to FE programmes are informed of course fees and our fees policy during the admissions process and as part of the admissions process adults are assessed for fee remittance eligibility.

5. FE ADMISSIONS

5.1 The admissions process for FE students will be overseen by the student operations team who work closely with the curriculum teams to ensure that each applicant is supported in a timely manner to meet their individual requirements and provide them with the right experience that supports their admission to college. For those students with a declared additional need, tailored open day, taster day (meet the team) and enrolment appointments are offered.

5.2 Progressing students are supported to apply for their chosen next college course in a timely manner, allowing the admissions process to apply to all applicants fairly and equitably.

6. APPRENTICESHIP ADMISSIONS

6.1 All applications relating to apprenticeship opportunities are facilitated through the Apprenticeship Recruitment Team who will undertake initial screening assessments and assist with securing suitable employment opportunities.

6.2 Applicants who meet the minimum entry requirements—specific to each apprenticeship standard and published on the college website—will receive initial advice and guidance.

6.3 An assessment of any additional support needs will be carried out to ensure the suitability of the employment placement. Applicants requiring support with maths or English may enrol on an intensive one-week upskilling programme.

6.4 Applicants shortlisted for a vacancy will attend an employer interview, which may include working interviews or assessment activities. Appointment to an apprenticeship role is not

guaranteed.

6.5 Following successful appointment, a tripartite enrolment will be completed between the employer, the apprentice and Nottingham College.

7. RECRUITMENT, PROMOTIONAL AND MARKETING MATERIALS

7.1 The college is committed to ensuring that applicants and potential applicants have access to high quality information, access to view facilities and speak to curriculum teams through planned and promoted open events as required.

7.2 The college has a schools' liaison team who work in partnership with local schools to ensure that young people understand the wide range of options available to them at Key Stage 5. Supporting school staff responsible for transition and careers is also a key part of this area of work.

7.3 The college works to ensure it meets the requirements of the matrix framework and the National Careers Strategy and are committed to providing impartial information, advice and careers guidance.

7.4 The college is committed to ensuring that course prospectuses, the college website, and other publicity materials contain accurate, reliable, current and comprehensive information that are designed in a market-appropriate and accessible way.

8. ENTRY CRITERIA

8.1 The college publishes academic entry criteria for all full-time courses on the college website. The criteria are guided by a commitment to ensure progression through levels of learning and to ensure applicants have the academic ability to achieve and succeed on their chosen course.

8.2 A faculty area may have additional requirements such as a higher qualification or vocational test / portfolio. Any requests to set different entry requirements must be approved by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Support before publishing.

8.3 Adjustments to the stated criteria may be made for applicants who are assessed as having a disability or learning difficulty.

8.4 Existing students seeking to progress to another course will be made aware of the full criteria of entry for the new course and will be supported through the progress review process.

8.5 Existing college students applying to progress to or apply for an apprenticeship are required to fulfil the entry criteria for their chosen course or opportunity.

8.6 Applicants for whom English is a second language may be asked to complete an assessment of their reading, writing and comprehension as a condition of entry onto non-ESOL courses.

9. APPLICANT ENGAGEMENT AND PRE-ENROLMENT ACTIVITIES

9.1 Applicants will be invited to attend college virtually or in person, for taster or 'meet the team' sessions to give them an opportunity to become aware of college life and get further information about their chosen subject and course. An opportunity for a one-to-one session with the tutor and any course-specific testing will be built into the sessions.

9.2 Some faculty areas may require an individual interview or an audition session. This should

be agreed with the admissions student business manager prior to the start of the academic year to arrange appropriate invitations and to ensure supporting information is provided to applicants.

10. INITIAL ASSESSMENTS

10.1 For some courses, applicants (including progressing students) may be asked to complete an initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy prior to the start of their course. All other applicants will complete this assessment during the first six weeks of the programme commencing. The outcome of the assessment will be used to identify any additional support required by the student and will not override any qualifications obtained.

11. SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

11.1 Nottingham College welcomes applications from people with disabilities and learning disabilities and people with literacy, numeracy and language difficulties.

11.2 Where an applicant is identified as having a diagnosed learning support need or has evidence of prior support, which may impact on their learning at Nottingham College, this will be followed up by the college's Inclusion and Support Team. Further information may be sought from the applicant to enable an assessment to take place before any support plan or arrangements are agreed.

11.3 If a learner has an education health and care plan (EHCP), the inclusion and support team will consult with the relevant local authority to ensure the college can support needs as outlined within the plan. If a learner applies without disclosing an EHCP, the college has a right to withdraw any conditional offer made where it's unable to support the identified needs.

11.4 Where a learner with an EHCP enrols onto an apprenticeship standard, the Apprenticeship Recruitment Team will support the employer in accessing relevant government grants or incentives to promote workplace inclusivity.

12. RISK ASSESSMENT AND SAFEGUARDING DUTY

12.1 The college has a duty to ensure that all students, apprentices and staff feel safe and protected while on campus, in the workplace, or during work placements, work experience or apprenticeships. The college will work collaboratively with statutory bodies and relevant local agencies to uphold this duty.

12.2 The college will undertake a risk assessment or a support to study assessment on applicants, students or apprentices who disclose potential risks.

12.3 Where there is an identified risk, the college may share information regarding the risk with statutory and other agencies in order to ensure the safety of its staff and students.

12.4 The college reserves the right to refuse entry to the college if, following the risk assessment process (which may include a safeguarding panel led by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Support) the college feels the risk attached to the applicant is too high.

12.5 Applicants, students and apprentices have the right to appeal any decision to refuse admission.

13 CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

13.1 Applicants are required to disclose any *relevant* and *unspent* criminal convictions or

ongoing court proceedings as part of their application. Where a disclosure is made, the safeguarding team will request further information and conduct a formal risk assessment. Refer to the college's FE criminal convictions disclosure policy for more information around relevant and unspent convictions.

13.2 A panel to review the application will be held if the risk rating within the risk assessment exceeds the appropriate thresholds.

14 DBS CHECKS

14.1 The college requires applicants for certain types of courses to undergo a DBS check prior to starting their course which will normally be completed as part of the application and offer process. This relates to courses where a work placement is mandatory and requires a DBS check. All offers for courses where there is a DBS check requirement will be conditional to the successful DBS clearance.

14.2 For apprentices whose workplace requires a DBS check, some employers may choose to fund the cost; however, this is not guaranteed, and applicants may be responsible for meeting this requirement where employer funding is not provided.

15 COURSE OFFERS

15.1 Course offers may have conditions in addition to the standard academic entry criteria.

15.2 For most course vocational course applications, a conditional offer at Nottingham College will be made immediately after an application is received online. This is subject to entry requirements of the course and place availability. NB some applications will go on hold whilst further information is sought to supplement the initial application, or the curriculum require a more in-depth discussion with applicants such as those applying for T Level qualifications where additional information and advice may be required.

15.3 Where courses are nearing capacity of offers, applicants will be notified via various channels (website / email) to explore alternative options as a back-up plan, to avoid disappointment.

15.4 For A-level and GCSE applications where entry requirements have not been met (not enough predicted grade information), applicants will be contacted within 10 working days via WhatsApp to establish missing information. Should entry requirements be met then an offer will be sent within 24 hours.

15.5 If the course applied for is not suitable, the applicant will be invited to arrange to meet a member of the careers team to explore other options and alternatives within the college.

15.6 The college will endeavour to secure a place on the most appropriate course for the applicant (subject to the risk assessment process above and place availability If this is not possible, the college will ensure that the applicant receives suitable advice on next steps.

15.7 Apprenticeship offers are subject to an offer of employment as an apprentice by an employer.

16 COURSE CLOSURE

16.1 Where a course is under-subscribed or there is a significant change to how a course is funded, the college reserves the right to withdraw the course. In such circumstances, applicants will be offered support and advice on the availability of suitable alternative courses.

16.2 Where a course is over-subscribed to a level where it will be impossible to accommodate

a student safely or appropriately, the college reserves the right to close the course to further applicants or hold a waiting list. Alternative options will be discussed with applicants in these instances.

16.3 Where an employer withdraws their vacancy for an apprenticeship job opportunity the college reserves the right to advise applicants that the apprenticeship is no longer available. Where this occurs, applicants will be offered a suitable alternative or a pre-apprenticeship programme. Alternative options will be discussed with applicants in these instances. Where applications for a vacancy are high, the employer and the college have the right to close the apprenticeship vacancy to further applications.

17 OFFER ACCEPTANCE

17.1 Applicants are encouraged to accept or decline their offer through their Prospect account, or by contacting the student operations team.

18 CONDITIONS OF ADMISSION

18.1 The college reserves the right to:

- Request references or other supporting information.
- Require DBS checks prior to entry onto courses that lead to a career where there is a requirement or where work experience providers have this as a requirement. Certain convictions may lead to a refused course offer.
- Review and refuse admission to an applicant who has previously been excluded from this or any other educational organisation. This may be subject to a risk or fitness to study assessment and panel meeting to assess the suitability to study in a college environment and duty of care to other students, apprentices and staff.
- Conduct risk and fitness to study assessments, review and refuse admission to applicants where there is evidence there is a threat or danger to themselves of others. This relates to the college's duty of care to staff, students and apprentices; and,
- Review and refuse admission to any applicant or student who has outstanding debt with the college.

19 APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

19.1 At times, Nottingham College may take the decision to decline admission onto a course. The stages below confirm the process if an applicant feels there are valid reasons why this should be reconsidered.

19.2 Stage 1 – Formal Review of Admission Decision

If an applicant wishes to request a formal review of a decision made by the college with respect to an application to study at the college, this should be submitted by completing the review of admission decision request form (which can be found on the college website) and sending to feedback@nottinghamcollege.ac.uk.

The feedback team will send an acknowledgement of receipt within two working days. The day of receipt will be day zero.

The review of admission decision request form will be sent an assistant principal. An assistant principal will respond directly to the applicant within five working days of receiving the admission review request.

An outcome will be confirmed of: 'course entry declined' or 'course entry accepted'.

19.3 Stage 2 – Appeal of Formal Review of Admission Decision

On completion of stage 1, an applicant has three working days from the date of receipt of the response to stage 1 to request an appeal against the outcome of the review of

admission decision.

An appeal can only be requested if not all evidence was considered when coming to a conclusion at stage 1.

The appeal should be submitted in writing or by email within three working days to feedback@nottinghamcollege.ac.uk

The feedback team will send an acknowledgement of receipt of appeal within two working days. The day of receipt will be day zero.

The feedback team will forward to the vice principal - curriculum and support, for consideration and response. The vice principal curriculum and support will respond directly to the applicant within five working days of receiving the appeal request. Should the vice principal curriculum and support not be available to review the decision, another member of the senior leadership team will be allocated to respond.

An outcome will be confirmed of: 'course entry declined' or 'course entry accepted'.

The decision of the vice principal curriculum and support is final and concludes the appeal process.

19.4 Any dissatisfaction with any administration or service delivery aspect of the admissions process can be addressed using the college's complaints procedure.

20 MEASURES

20.1 The effectiveness of the policy will be monitored and measured through student feedback. In monitoring its impact, the college will have due regard to the college's equality and diversity policy which is measured through the EDI committee.

21 LINKS TO OTHER COLLEGE POLICIES

- Nottingham College Safeguarding Policy
- Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Data Protection Policy