

Higher Education

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Chichester College Group Higher Education Recruitment and Admission Policy 2023-2026

Policy Review Area	Higher Education
Lead Manager	Deputy Director of Information & Funding - Learner Services
Approval Level	Higher Education Board
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Next Review	September 2024

Chichester College Group

Higher Education Recruitment and Admission of Students Policy

1. Aim

- 1.1. To ensure that Chichester College Group attracts, recruits, selects and enrolls students for undergraduate studies and HE apprenticeships in a clear, fair, inclusive, transparent and consistent manner.
- 1.2. To help students succeed and achieve their potential by ensuring they are offered a place on an appropriate course which best meets their learning needs and aspirations, widening participation, achievement and progression.

2. Principles

- 2.1. Chichester College Group is committed to
 - 2.1.1. creating an inclusive and diverse community of HE students and apprentices and promoting equality of opportunity for all students from all backgrounds.
 - 2.1.2. providing progression routes for as wide a range of students as possible, particularly those from under-represented groups within HE and students who otherwise may be unlikely to participate in higher-level studies.
 - 2.1.3. ensuring that candidates who are capable of successfully completing a higher education programme are recruited to undergraduate level courses, including those without formal qualifications who are able to demonstrate their potential for the course through other means.
- 2.2. This policy is to be read and operated in conjunction with the following policies and procedures: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Marketing Policy and Review of Programme Specifications.
- 2.3. The recognition of prior learning policy and procedure (Appendix 1) may be used in conjunction with this policy on a case-by-case basis in discussion with the Higher Education Quality Manager.
- 2.4. This policy applies only to full-time Higher Education programmes delivered by and in association with Chichester College Group where the awarding body has delegated admissions procedures to the college.

3. Equality, diversity and inclusion.

- 3.1. The College is committed to meeting its Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups of people. The College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy demonstrates the College's vision of culture and society where human difference is anticipated and diversity celebrated routinely.
- 3.2. The College's application process allows all prospective students to make an application and receive a fair outcome, regardless of background. The College will reduce or remove any barriers not necessary to the appropriate selection and assessment of applicants.

- 3.3. The College proactively seeks to attract students from under-represented groups through its widening participation partnership work. The College will work to remove barriers for people accessing Higher Education courses.

4. Course information and promotion

- 4.1. Policies and procedures for selection and admission to higher education courses and apprenticeships are readily accessible by prospective students and their supporters, and clearly articulate how the application and selection process operates.
- 4.2. The College's promotional materials
 - 4.2.1. provide clear guidance on the application process, including expected timescales and key milestones, what communications will be sent and through which channels, any actions required and by when.
 - 4.2.2. provide information about progression and employment opportunities for graduates.
 - 4.2.3. are inclusive and encourage all members of the community to participate.
 - 4.2.4. are reviewed and revised annually to ensure accuracy, continued relevance and representation of all groups served by the college.
- 4.3. Programme specifications accurately describe the learning outcomes and skills developed by following the programme and give a clear understanding of the unique features of the course described. Programme specifications for all Higher Education courses are reviewed annually and are available through the college website and through links from the UCAS website.
- 4.4. All Course Leads maintain and update the information held on the UCAS website, working with the Higher Education Office and Admissions. The Higher Education Quality Manager ensures consistency of approach.
- 4.5. Recruitment activities such as Open Days, events designed to promote higher education and taster days will provide potential candidates with information on the courses offered, academic demands made by the courses, progression and employment opportunities, fees, additional support and financial support available.
- 4.6. All College staff engaged in the delivery of admissions, recruitment and widening access are appropriately trained and resourced. Training will be reviewed, evaluated and refreshed regularly to ensure that practice and policy are fully aligned and reflect the current landscape.

5. Entry requirements

- 5.1. Conditional and unconditional offers will be in line with course entry requirements published on the course pages of the College's website, though individual offers may vary. The College's 'typical offer' to determine candidate suitability is successful completion of any level 3 programme but entry requirements for specific courses may vary.
- 5.2. The College will consider a wide range of UK and international qualifications on application, and is committed to giving full and fair consideration to all entry qualifications.
- 5.3. Interview, portfolio or audition requirements are outlined on each course page of the website and are required in addition to qualifications.
- 5.4. Applicants whose first language is not English and who do not have GCSE in English will be asked to take an IELTS assessment or equivalent as part of their offer conditions. They will need to achieve an overall score of 6.0, with 6.0 in the writing element and 5.5 in all other sub elements. Students who have English as a second language but have been schooled here are required to achieve at least a grade D/3 in GCSE English

6. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

- 6.1. Recognition of Prior Learning is a process by which Higher Education providers may award credit for learning that has taken place prior to enrolling on a course of study.
- 6.2. Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) - RPEL is the recognition of informal learning gained from experience outside of formal education or training, such as employment, voluntary work or community activities and focuses on the learning gained from those experiences. The applicant must be able to evidence the learning, it must be substantial and at a level that can be mapped to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ). All applications for RPEL will be assessed by the Programme Lead in consultation with the Higher Education Quality Manager.
- 6.3. Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RCPL) – RCPL is recognition of learning certificated by another recognised academic institution that is accredited to a CCG qualification.
- 6.4. Please refer to Appendix 1: Recognition of Prior Learning Policy for further information

7. Applications

- 7.1. Applicants will need to apply through UCAS or clearing if they wish to apply for more than one institution. This excludes teacher training and all part-time HE courses for which application is made direct to the College. If an applicant wants to apply only to CCG, then they are able to apply via a direct application. Internal applicants who are only applying to CCG may also apply through the direct route. Application for internal progression from a Foundation Degree to a Top-up Degree is also a direct process where CCG is the current Foundation Degree students' only choice.
- 7.2. Internal application deadline dates will mirror the UCAS timeline.
- 7.3. Applicants will receive an automatic acknowledgement of receipt of their application.
- 7.4. The admissions adviser will check the application for completeness and entry criteria. Where the application is appropriate it will be passed to the Study Programme Leader of the chosen programme. Where the application is inappropriate, it will be rejected and the applicant will receive a rejection email either from UCAS or directly from the College. The admissions adviser will log the reason for rejection. The appeals against admissions decisions process will come into operation – see below.
- 7.5. At any point throughout the application process, applicants are entitled to receive information and advice from the HE Admissions Team, Student Financial Support and Additional Learning Support.

8. Interview and Selection Process

- 8.1. The selection process will use the learning outcomes for the programme as the basis for selection. The purpose of the process will be to use a standard set of questions and assessments in addition to subject specific questions and assessments, for each candidate to ensure a fair outcome. In order to minimise barriers to candidates, assessments and tasks used in the selection process will only be used where they are relevant to the course for which they are applying.
- 8.2. All candidates will be invited to an interview, either face to face, by telephone, or online. In addition, an applicant's suitability may be determined by means of previous qualifications,

audition, academic assessment, portfolio and/or accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL).

- 8.3. Invitation to interview will be via email. The invitation will include the date, time, duration and location of the interview, what to prepare and if a portfolio is required.
- 8.4. Appropriate facilities are in place to ensure that applicants are able to disclose their learning difficulties and/or disabilities and other barriers to learning. Support is available throughout the application to enrolment process; e.g. signers for deaf applicants or adapted materials for applicants with visual impairments.
- 8.5. The interviewer should
 - 8.5.1. highlight the key learning outcomes for the course or apprenticeship;
 - 8.5.2. ask a standard set of questions to test whether the candidate meets the recommended entry criteria, skills and knowledge as set out in the Programme Specification;
 - 8.5.3. deliver a selection assessment activity to demonstrate the candidate's readiness to take the course or apprenticeship (for example, an audition piece, a skills or knowledge test or portfolio). The activity should be capable of adaptation to meet the needs of candidates with specific needs.
 - 8.5.4. establish whether the candidate needs any adaptation to the course, apprenticeship, course delivery or physical resources in order to be able to succeed on the course. (The Additional Support Request Form should be completed at interview if needed.)
 - 8.5.5. discuss career aspirations and/or reasons for studying the course;
 - 8.5.6. complete and sign the interview record paperwork for the selection process ensuring that all fields are completed and return it to the admissions adviser within 2 working days of interview;
 - 8.5.7. advise the applicant of the appeals process.

9. Offers

- 9.1. The decision from the interview will be communicated to the candidate online via UCAS or by email.
- 9.2. If an application is successful, the interviewing tutor will make one of two types of offer: unconditional or conditional. Where appropriate, conditions may be placed on an offer if an applicant is currently studying towards academic qualifications. This is to give the applicant the time they may need to meet the entry requirements. If an applicant has already achieved the entry requirements an unconditional offer may be made.

10. Responding to an offer

- 10.1. A student who receives an offer from the College must respond by the deadline set by UCAS. Applicants can choose to accept one offer as their firm (first) choice and one as their insurance (second) choice.
- 10.2. Offers made to internal HE applicants must be accepted by the deadline stipulated by the HE Admissions Officer.

11. Confirmation of conditional offers

- 11.1. If an applicant has received a conditional offer, the final stage of the application process takes place after the publication of examination results. If an applicant achieves the entry requirements as stated in the conditional offer, the place will be confirmed via UCAS (or by the College if non-UCAS). Should an applicant not meet the conditions of their offer, a final decision will be made on the basis of their interview/audition, examination results, number of places remaining and any other relevant information.
- 11.2. All conditions must be met by the deadline given by UCAS (usually the end of August) this also applies to applicants who have chosen to defer their entry
- 11.3. Successful candidates will be given joining instructions either during the selection process or during the July-August period before the course starts, taking account of any embargo period. Successful candidates will receive a joining pack providing information on course start dates, Fresher's Day, additional support services, careers information and accommodation services. New students will be invited to join induction.

12. Deferred Entry

- 12.1. The College does accept applications for a deferred entry (for one year only) without the requirement for the applicant to be interviewed again. Applicants should include a brief outline in the personal statement of the reason(s) for their deferral. Applicants will be interviewed/auditioned as described in this Policy.

13. Transferring mid-year and/or end of year

- 13.1. Chichester College Group facilitates transfers between HE providers; students will need to apply through UCAS and provide official transcripts detailing the modules completed and their credit value. This will be assessed by the tutor to decide whether a transfer is possible. The CCG Recognition of Prior Learning policy will apply – see appendix 1.

14. Appeals against admissions decision

- 14.1. Candidates are entitled to feedback on their selection process. The interviewer will provide verbal or written feedback within five working days on request made to Chichester College Group Admissions.
- 14.2. In all cases if a candidate wishes to appeal an admissions decision they should complete a candidate appeal form, which will be provided on request by the HE Admissions Adviser. In the form, the candidate is asked to explain why the admissions decision is in breach of published procedure. The Vice Principal for Higher Education will consider the appeal after consulting the interviewer, information available at the time of the decision and the published procedures.
- 14.3. The Vice Principal for Higher Education informs the candidate of the outcome of the appeal.
- 14.4. If the candidate wishes to appeal the decision s/he is asked to complete a second appeal form within four weeks, setting out the reasons why the appeal is in breach of college published procedures. This stage will be considered by the Principal with responsibility for Higher Education who will analyse all available information, interview all persons involved in the decision and reach a conclusion. The Principal's decision will be final.

15. Changes to programme

- 15.1. The College reserves the right to make changes to or withdraw a course where under-recruitment affects the financial viability of a course or where national, regional or strategic objectives require. Any changes to the programme made after the selection process will be communicated to all candidates by the Admissions Team after approval from the Vice Principal for Higher Education. Notifications to all selected candidates will be by email and will provide telephone and email contact details so that any questions can be put to the course team. Questions will be answered within five working days. Changes to programme must be confirmed by all applicants, in line with Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) guidelines.

16. Criminal Convictions

- 16.1. The College recognises the contribution that people with criminal records can make and welcomes applications from them. A person's criminal record will not, in itself, prevent that person from being offered a place on the chosen course. Any information given will be treated in the strictest confidence. Suitable applicants will not be refused a place on a course because of offences which are not relevant to, and do not place them at or make them a risk in, the course for which they are applying.
- 16.2. For applications to courses covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, the College requires applicants to disclose any 'unspent' convictions and 'unspent' conditional cautions. The college is also required to know if the applicant is currently subject to a criminal investigation, facing a pending prosecution and also if an applicant is currently being supervised by the youth offending team or probation. Further information will be sought from applicants who make a disclosure and risk assessments will be undertaken.
- 16.3. If applicants are unsure about how to provide the information requested, support can be provided by contacting NACRO's Criminal Record Advice Line on 0300 123 1999 or helpline@nacro.org.uk. All enquiries to this service are confidential and applicants will not be asked for any personal details (unless information or advice is requested to be sent).
- 16.4. For further information on how long it takes for convictions and conditional cautions to be spent, please refer to NACRO's guide on the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act by visiting <https://www.nacro.org.uk/criminal-record-support-service/support-for-individuals/disclosing-criminal-records/rehabilitation-offenders-act/>
- 16.5. Courses exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 usually require the completion of a work placement in order to achieve the qualification. Work placements in childcare, working with vulnerable adults, health care, teaching, accounting and the legal system require a criminal record check appropriate to the role / course applied for. Criminal records checks take place through the Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly the Criminal Records Bureau). Some work placements may require an enhanced DBS check. This will be discussed as part of the applicant interview. Students will be asked to complete the DBS process before any work placements take place, normally at the start of the academic year. All offers for courses where there is a DBS check requirement will be conditional to the successful DBS clearance.

- 16.6. Chichester College Group reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a place in circumstances where students receive an offer before the process for scrutinising disclosures of criminal convictions / cautions / investigations / prosecutions has been completed.

17. Registering students at partnering institutions

- 17.1. CCG will submit student name and contact details to the partner institution solely for the purpose of recording details and progression information. By registering for a programme leading to a partner validated award the student agrees to the sharing of their information with the partner institution for this purpose. The partner institution will not make any contact with students unless there is a specific need in relation to their studies towards a partner validated award. It is the student's responsibility to keep their personal information up to date with their institution and to notify them of any changes or errors.

18. Other Information

- 18.1. Applications submitted via UCAS are subject to the anti-fraud procedures and checks carried out by UCAS. All personal statements submitted via UCAS are subject to the UCAS similarity detection procedure. Where a personal statement contains significant similarities to another previously submitted to UCAS the College is notified of this and of the extent of the similarity.
- 18.2. All applications highlighted by the UCAS Similarity Detection Service are sent to the Admissions Tutor for consideration. If the Admissions Tutor wishes to make a conditional or unconditional offer, the applicant may be invited to submit a revised personal statement by a specific date, normally within two weeks of the request. On receipt of the revised personal statement the application will be reviewed by the Admissions Tutor and a selection decision will be made in accordance with standard procedures

19. Status of this policy

- 19.1. The policy was approved by the Higher Education Board and supersedes all previous documentation.
- 19.2. The operation of this policy will be kept under review by the Higher Education Quality Manager
- 19.3. It may be reviewed and varied from time to time by the Higher Education Board.
- 19.4. This policy has been impact assessed to ensure that it does not adversely affect staff on the grounds of their disability, gender or race.

Appendix 1: Chichester College Group Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

Recognition of Prior Learning Defined

Recognition of prior learning is a process through which credit can be awarded for learning undertaken prior to entry on to a HE course. CCG will consider a range of learning experiences to support wider participation in HE.

Prior learning can be either through informal experiential learning referred to as Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) or Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RCPL)

RPEL

is the recognition of informal learning gained from experience outside of formal education or training, such as employment, voluntary work or community activities and focuses on the learning gained from those experiences. The applicant must be able to evidence the learning, it must be substantial and at a level that can be mapped to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ). All applications for RPEL will be assessed by the Programme Lead in consultation with the Higher Education Quality Manager.

When to use RPEL

The RPEL process is relevant where an individual has evidence of having previously learnt something but has never received formal recognition for it through a qualification or other form of certification. Evidence can draw on any aspect of a candidate's prior experience including:

- domestic / family life
- informal education and training
- work activities
- community or voluntary activities.

Assessment of RPEL Evidence

Evidence obtained through the RPL process must be assessed, to the same rigorous quality as evidence obtained through any other process.

The Study Programme Leader in consultation with the Higher Education Quality Manager will review applications for RPEL to ensure that the evidence is:

Valid:

Does the evidence genuinely demonstrate that the demands of the learning outcome have been met? For RPEL, currency of evidence will be of particular concern. Does, for example, the evidence meet up-to-date demands or is it representative of practice that has significantly changed?

Authentic:

This involves consideration of whether the evidence being examined is genuinely the work of the learner. For example, the evidence may have been produced by somebody else, or may be the result of the work of a team. In the latter case, this would be acceptable if the learning outcome was

related to team / joint working, but not if it was being used as evidence of an activity which should have been carried out individually.

Sufficient:

There must be enough evidence to fully meet the requirements of the learning outcome, or learning outcomes being considered. If there is insufficient evidence to fully meet requirements, then evidence obtained through RPEL must be complemented by additional evidence gained through other suitable assessment method(s) before requirements / outcomes can be said to have been met.

Reliable:

The evidence obtained through RPEL should be such that an assessor would arrive at the same assessment decision, were the assessment to be repeated.

Outcomes of RPEL

If individuals can produce relevant evidence, that meets learning outcome requirements then, recognition can be given for their existing knowledge, understanding or skills.

If an individual can demonstrate that they meet all the learning outcomes and assessment criteria in a unit, then they can claim credit for that unit solely on the basis of their RPEL achievement.

If however, evidence from RPEL is only sufficient to cover one or more learning outcomes, or to partly meet the need of a learning outcome, then additional assessment methods should be employed to generate sufficient evidence on which to base a safe assessment decision.

RPEL Process

Course teams wishing to undertake RPEL must ensure that:

- it is carried out by designated staff with relevant levels of expertise to meet the requirements of the assessment strategy / guidance for the qualification concerned.

The methods of assessment used will be determined by the assessment strategy for the qualification being assessed and might, for example, include:

- a portfolio of evidence expert witness testimony
- reflective accounts or completing a piece of work with a reflective statement
- professional discussion
- completion of the assessment task for the module / unit

The assessment of the evidence should ensure that it is:

- authentic – that the evidence reflects the student's own efforts and achievement.
- Sufficient – that it fully demonstrates the learning for the credit being claimed
- valid – that the evidence matches the learning being claimed. It must be valid and reliable
- current – the evidence reflects recent learning and demonstrates that the student has kept up to date with developments in the area of proposed study.
- Specific – the learning can be clearly identified and mapped against the learning outcomes
- appropriate – of sufficiently high quality when mapped against the level of the qualification

Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL)

RPCL is a process through which certificated learning previously undertaken can be reviewed and where appropriate allow for credit obtained in an earlier programme of study to be credited to another programme of study. Credit can be used from a previously uncompleted or completed award.

To claim credit for RPCL evidence of previous relevant academic qualifications must be submitted. These will be assessed against the learning outcomes for the modules / courses for which credit is being claimed.

After assessing all of the evidence the Study Programme Lead will:

- Make a formal assessment decision
- Feedback assessment decisions to the learner, confirming decision and giving guidance on the available options (particularly in situations where the decision has been not to award credit.)
- Maintain appropriate records
- Ensure that learners are aware of their right to access the appeals process should they feel the assessment decision was unfair.

The assessor must ensure that all learning outcomes and assessment criteria being claimed are covered and that records of assessment are maintained in the usual way. The process must be subject to the same quality assurance requirements as any other assessment method.

The College encourages the use of these processes as they contribute to widening participation and a more diverse and inclusive HE student community

This form is to be used in conjunction with the Chichester College Group Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

Candidate's full name	Qualification for which RPL is being claimed

Please detail the modules for which you are claiming credit for

Module Code	Module Title	No. of Credits

Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning

Details of previous qualifications for which credit is being requested

(Attach certificates / transcripts)

Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning

Details of experiential learning and evidence for which credit is being claimed

Experiential Learning	Source	Evidence

Please attach copies of all evidence e.g. portfolio, reflective statements, transcripts of professional discussions, interviews

Academic staff to complete:

Details of the materials / evidence considered

Is the evidence:

• Authentic Yes / No
Comments

• Sufficient Yes / No
Comments

• Valid Yes / No
Comments

• Current Yes / No
Comments

• Appropriate Yes / No
Comments

Is the claim for credit Accepted Yes / No

If yes please detail the modules to which credit can be applied

Module Code	Module Title	No. of Credits

If no please add comments:

Signed:

Assessor

Name:

Signature:

Date:

HE Quality Manager

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix 2 – HE Recruitment & Admissions Process – UCAS applicants

