



WAVERLEY ABBEY
COLLEGE

Admissions Policy

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www.waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk

Admissions Policy

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1. Introduction

This policy is underpinned by the *Statement of Vision, Values and Faith* and should be read in the context of that statement. The Admissions Policy explains how the college manages the admissions process. The policy and statement are available on the College website, www.waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk.

The Waverley Abbey College (WAC) Admissions Policy has been written with reference to the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education Advice and Guidance, the WAC Access and Participation Plan and the relevant admissions policies for the universities with which we work.

The primary aim of this document is to assist WAC in delivering an exceptional student experience in all aspects of a student's relationship with the College and so, in turn, help deliver the vision and mission of the College.

2. Principles

Waverley Abbey College encourages applications from all those with potential to do well at College, whatever their background. Our values include a belief in the power of education to transform lives and communities, a commitment to encouraging the personal potential of individuals and a passion for the highest quality of education and scholarship. We attract students from a wide range of social and ethnic backgrounds and have a strong record of success in student retention and employment.

We are therefore committed to:

- operating a non-discriminatory policy towards students and ensuring students receive equal treatment, irrespective of gender, age, ethnicity, culture, class, sexuality, disability, religion or belief
- minimising barriers to applicants and creating a balanced and diverse student body
- widening access among under-represented groups
- using reliable selection methods in order to admit students with the potential to do well in their chosen course of study
- using admissions practices that are consistent, transparent and fair
- securing a good match between the current achievements and potential of applicants and the demands of programmes
- providing accurate and easily understood information to applicants in an accessible format
- monitoring and reviewing policies and procedures.

3. The application process

3.1. Waverley Abbey College accepts applications for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes directly from applicants (we do not use the UCAS system). Information about the programmes offered at the College, application forms and dates and fees, open days, can be found on the College website: www.waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk

3.2. We are currently unable to accept applications from those residing outside of the UK unless they have a valid British passport.

3.4. For each applicant, irrespective of the point of entry into the programme and past experience, Waverley Abbey College takes up references and conducts an interview.

3.5. When all the supporting documents and references have been supplied, applicants will be invited for interview. Applicants are advised to include all required documents with their online application so as not to delay its progress.

3.6. All applications that are submitted before the application deadline (the date is published on the College website) will be considered in reference to the criteria in this policy.

3.7. Applications submitted after the deadline date may be considered, depending on the availability of places, and applicants may be given the option of being placed on the waiting list.

3.8. All personal information offered by an applicant is held as confidential and with access restricted to those involved directly with the admissions process.

4. Equal opportunities

4.1. Waverley Abbey College is dedicated to operating a non-discriminatory policy towards students and is committed to ensuring students receive equal treatment, irrespective of gender, age, ethnicity, culture, class, sexuality, disability, religion or belief.

4.2. The College makes admissions solely on merit and does not discriminate against individuals on any of the above-mentioned grounds.

4.3. Applicants with a disability or impairment are encouraged to disclose this in their application. The College will give an assessment of any reasonable adjustments that might be made, so that the applicant can take this into account when deciding whether to study at Waverley Abbey College. Such information will not be taken into account when making admissions decisions, except if there are overriding health and safety concerns, or barriers in relation to the professional requirements for an individual programme of study, or where any reasonable adjustments cannot be made (for further information please see the Disability Policy available on the College website).

5. Applicants with criminal convictions

5.1. Applicants with unspent criminal convictions will not necessarily be prevented from gaining admission to Waverley Abbey College.

5.2. An applicant will be required to make a full declaration of all unspent criminal convictions. The information provided will be strictly confidential and shared only with the Academic Registrar and the Admissions Review Panel. The panel will normally include the Programme Leader, a tutor, the Head of Faculty, and the Academic Registrar.

5.3. The admissions process for those making a criminal convictions declaration has two stages:

5.4. Stage 1 – If the applicant meets the normal entry requirements, the application will be processed as outlined above and on the same basis as all other applicants, i.e. the applicant will be interviewed on the basis of their academic qualifications or life experience qualifications.

5.5. Stage 2 – A separate risk assessment will be carried out by the Admissions Review Panel based on the criminal convictions declaration. The panel will seek to exercise a duty of care toward the applicant and toward the wider College community.

5.6. The panel will consider whether the nature of the criminal conviction would prevent the applicant from pursuing a placement if it forms an integral part of the programme or pursuing the profession to which the chosen programme leads.

5.7. If the panel decides that an applicant's conviction would bar them from their chosen profession, this will be clearly communicated to the applicant.

5.8. If the panel decides that the level of risk to the applicant or to the wider College community is not acceptable, this will be clearly communicated to the applicant.

5.9. If the panel decides to admit the applicant, with or without provisos, conditions or checks in place, the decision will be communicated to the applicant and the application will be proceeded with in the normal way and as outlined in this policy.

6. Entry requirements

6.1. Details of the admissions criteria for individual programmes are published on the College website

6.2. Normally, only those applicants who meet the minimum entry criteria on the basis of their initial application are invited to attend an interview.

6.3. The College believes that a good level of English language, both spoken and written, is important for successful completion of its programmes. Applicants whose first language is not English, or who are not educated in the English language, are normally required to have gained a minimum grade of 6.5 (with minimum 6.0 in all components) in the IELTS Academic test or equivalent other tests. Applicants will be required to supply evidence of their achievement. Applicants may be required to sit a short paper prior to interview in order to demonstrate their written English language skills.

6.4. Allowance may be made for an applicant with mitigating circumstances that have had a detrimental and unavoidable effect on their previous education. We may decide to offer a place to such an applicant if we consider that they have the potential to do well at the College.

6.5. Applicants who have non-standard qualifications, or who wish to have work or life experience taken into consideration are welcome to apply. Applications will be considered on an individual basis in line with this Admissions Policy, the entry requirements of the chosen course of study and the validating university's regulations. We will look at the applicant's potential to benefit from the chosen programme.

7. Application for Recognition of Prior Learning

The College encourages applications for its undergraduate programme from those with prior learning or related life experience and with the potential to do well at the College whatever their background (NB. The College does not currently offer accreditation of prior learning for its postgraduate programmes).

Accreditation is the formal mechanism for the recognition of learning that is achieved outside of the College's validated undergraduate programmes of study.

7.1 Principles of management

The accreditation process is available for undergraduate programmes and is managed according to the following principles:

7.1.1 Middlesex University is responsible for the academic standards of all academic credit awarded in its name.

7.1.2 The College manages the process of assessing and awarding academic credit for its validated programmes in accordance with Middlesex University's Quality Assurance policies, Regulations and Policy for the Accreditation for the Award of Academic Credit.

7.1.3 The College will assess all applications for credit rigorously in accordance with the assessment regulations and applicable policies of Middlesex University. Credit will be awarded for demonstrable learning achievement (ie. not time taken).

7.1.4 The assessment of accreditation will be subject to internal moderation and approved by the Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board and appropriate external scrutiny.

7.1.5 Accreditation can lead to the award of specific credit. The award itself does not constitute the award of a University qualification but rather credit that can count towards such a qualification.

7.1.6 Specific credit is that which relates to and can count towards the achievement of an identified Middlesex University qualification.

7.1.7 The award of specific credit provides students with exemption awarded against specific modules of the programme and enables students to access the programme at a later stage and complete it in less time than it would normally take.

7.1.8 Specific credit for learning cannot be awarded at a higher level or with a greater number of credit points than the general credit rating of the same learning.

7.1.9 The maximum amount of specific credit that can count towards a Middlesex University qualification is defined in the Middlesex University Regulations.

7.1.10 The Regulations stipulate that the maximum amount of credit which can be counted towards a qualification is normally two-thirds of the total required for the qualification. For example, 240 credits can be recognised towards the 360 credits required for a Bachelor's degree with honours. However, a programme of study may require that a student undertake compulsory modules against which a claim for prior learning may not be made.

7.1.11 All credit awarded will be certificated. All specific credit used towards an award bearing programme will be recorded as part of a student Statement of Results or Transcript.

7.1.12 All credit awarded through accreditation will be ungraded.

7.1.13 Claimants may appeal against decisions of the Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board (see below for members) in accordance with the College's Admissions Policy or its Student Complaints and Appeals Policy.

7.1.14 The College will provide advice to support the development of a proposal or claim for accreditation and appropriate staff development for those involved in accreditation assessment.

7.1.15 The accreditation proposal or claim remains the responsibility of the proposer/claimant.

7.1.16 Accreditation activity will be subject to annual monitoring.

7.2. Types of Accreditation

There are two types of learning activity, certificated and/or experiential learning (RPL), which can be accredited by the College towards a Middlesex University qualification:

7.2.1. Prior certificated learning

Certificated learning includes qualifications or certificates awarded by a university or other awarding body as evidence of previously recognised learning that has an established academic credit value.

Where a prior qualification or certificate is not from a recognised awarding body, its equivalence to specific learning outcomes will need to be established with reference to UK NARIC. Where a qualification or certificate's credit value cannot be established, the prior learning associated with it will require further evidence that can be assessed.

7.2.2. Prior experiential learning

Academic credit for prior experiential learning and/or work-based learning (that is learning that is derived from experience or work) can also be claimed where appropriate evidence of this learning is submitted by the claimant for assessment by the College.

7.3. The Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board

The College awards academic credit for certificated or experiential learning through the Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board.

The Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board is constituted as follows:

- Programme Leader
- Middlesex University Link Tutor
- Assessor(s) and external examiners as appropriate

Terms of Reference of the above board are:

- To consider and, where appropriate, to award credit in respect of claims for accreditation put forward by individuals and to decide upon the number and level of credits.

The decisions of the board are reported to the assessment board of the programme concerned and are subject to scrutiny by external examiners aligned to the programme. The operation of the Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board will be included as part of the programme annual monitoring report required by the University.

7.4. Accreditation of Individual RPL Claims

Individual RPL claims can include evidence of either certificated and experiential learning or a combination of both.

7.5. RPL claims

Individual RPL claims can be considered at the stage of admission to the programme of study providing the opportunity for exemption awarded against specific modules of the programme to enable students to access the programme at a later stage and complete it in less time than it would normally take.

Each Faculty identifies the mechanisms in place for the consideration of individual RPL claims. The Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board oversees this process. Faculties considering individual RPL claims for the purpose of admissions shall be required to have an approved RPL Assessment Plan in place to ensure that the process of assessing claims is reliable, valid and transparent. Faculty Assessment Plans are approved by the Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board and are reviewed annually. All claims for credit at level 5 and above must include evidence of external review.

Individual RPL claims cannot normally be applied for during a programme of study.

7.6. The process for making an individual credit claim with certificated learning:
Normally an RPL claim for specific credit with certificated learning in relation to a College programme of study will be made during the admissions stage.

Where a claimant/applicant provides evidence of certificated learning, an assessment of the certificated learning against the learning outcomes of the programme will be made by the relevant Programme Leader or nominee. This assessment will be subject to moderation by a second assessor and where not previously subject to external review at level 5 or above, scrutiny by an appropriate External Examiner.

7.7. The process for making an individual specific credit claim with experiential and/or work-based learning:

RPL claims for specific credit involve a process of identifying, assessing and accrediting relevant learning that has been gained through experience (such as employment, work experience or volunteering) that can be shown to be equivalent to learning within the named programme or modules.

Where a claimant/applicant provides evidence of experiential learning, an assessment of the experiential learning against the learning outcomes of the programme will be made by the relevant Programme Leader or nominee. This assessment will be subject to moderation by a second assessor and where at level 5 or above scrutiny by an appropriate External Examiner.

The RPL claim will then be considered for approval by the Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board with regards to admissions with credit.

8. The selection process

8.1. The College makes admissions decisions solely on merit and does not discriminate against individuals on race, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, culture, class, sexuality, disability, religion or belief.

8.2. All applicants are invited to attend an interview. During the interview process further information about the programme and its requirements will be offered to applicants who will, in turn, have the opportunity to ask questions. The interview will form part of the selection process.

8.3. The College may use tests as part of the selection or interview process for programmes where practical skills and experience are required and where applicant's qualifications are non-standard.

8.4. For those applying for direct entry to BA years 2, 3 or 4, the College may set conditions of entry that must be completed by a deadline date which will be noted in the offer letter. These will include essay-writing to cover specific knowledge areas and may require attendance on an introductory course.

8.5. Admissions decisions are made by the Year Leader in consultation with module tutors and the Admissions Office, based on the entry criteria, the personal statement, references, the interview and past and predicted academic performance.

8.6. Admissions decisions are made on the basis of the information that is included in the application. The College may withdraw an offer at any stage from an applicant who has made false statements or omitted significant information in his/her application.

8.7. If an application does not contain enough information, we will give the applicant an opportunity to provide the missing information before making an admissions decision. Otherwise, we may make an offer conditional on the applicant providing the missing information. Once a decision is made on an application, the College will only consider additional information at its discretion.

9. Deferred applications

9.1. Applicants may ask to defer their application for one year when they first apply to the College by writing to the Admissions Officer after their application has been submitted.

9.2. Any conditions that are attached to an offer must be fulfilled by 31 August of the year of entry.

9.3. An application or an offer of a place on the programme may not be deferred for more than one year. Any further application will follow the normal admissions process as outlined above.

10. Communicating admissions decisions

10.1. As soon as a decision on an application is made the Admissions Office will write to the applicant directly with an offer of a place, a deferred place or a refusal – this is normally within 14 days of the interview date.

10.2. Applicants who are offered a place on a programme must respond by the date stated in the letter and accept the offer online, and in order to secure a place on the programme the non-refundable deposit needs to be paid.

10.3. The conditions that are attached to an offer must be fulfilled by the date on the offer letter.

10.4. All offers are subject to the College entrance requirements and the validating university's regulations.

11. Changes to programmes

11.1. From time to time, we may find it necessary to make a change to a programme. This may be outside of our control or may be due to an improvement to the programme.

11.2. We will contact any applicants who are affected by any such decisions as soon as possible. In these circumstances, applicants will be entitled to withdraw their application by written notice to the College Admissions Office and will be refunded in full for any deposit and fees already paid to the College.

12. Appeals and complaints

12.1 Waverley Abbey College is committed to handling applications promptly and fairly and in line with its Admissions Policy. If an applicant believes the decision is unfair, an appeal may be made using the following procedures:

- i. Lodging a formal appeal or complaint: a written appeal or complaint, which should include any associated information or documents, should be made to the College Academic Registrar, who will consider the complaint, consult the interview panel, and then respond in writing to the applicant.
- ii. Pursuing a formal appeal or complaint (1): If the applicant is not satisfied or has remaining concerns an appeal or complaint may be made in writing to the Programme Leader, who will review the Academic Registrar's report.
- iii. Pursuing a formal appeal or complaint (2): should the applicant be dissatisfied after step ii; the applicant may refer the appeal or complaint directly to the College Principal. The College Principal will meet the applicant in person, if required, and carefully consider the concerns raised. A written response will be made to the applicant, copied to the validating university, (if applicable) and include contact details for stage iv.
- iv. Final appeal or complaint: the applicant may make a final appeal or complaint to the validating university, if applicable, if they have concerns about the conduct of the process set out in steps i – iii above. Dissatisfaction with the outcome of step iii is not sufficient grounds for appeal or complaint.