

Further Education Admissions Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that DN Colleges Group (DNCG) outlines its commitment to offering a fair and transparent admissions policy and process. It serves to ensure that all potential students have access to impartial Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance and to support individuals in identifying the course/programme of study which most meets their skills and aspirations in an appropriate and confidential environment.
- 1.2 This policy is written in the context of the College Strategic Plan and Curriculum Blueprint to support students to achieve their aspirations whilst ensuring they are placed on the right course at the right level.

This policy is written in line with DNCG Statement of Intent which identifies a commitment to core values, safeguarding, health safety and welfare, equality and diversity and Data Protection.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy sets out the admissions policy and principles to all applicants to DNCG wishing to be enrolled on the following courses:
- Full-time study programmes
 - Part-time courses (other than some short courses and recreational learning courses)
 - Apprenticeships

Students aged 14-16 are admitted to DNCG through partnership agreements with the Local Authority or with the individual secondary school or academy, as a result processes will vary from those stated in this policy. No student under the school leaving age can be admitted without prior consultation with the Director of FE responsible for 14-16 provision this includes those students who are deemed as Elected Home Educated (EHE).

This policy does not cover Higher Education (HE) provision and applicants applying for HE courses should refer to the Higher Education Admissions Policy.

3 Responsibilities

- 3.1 Student recruitment and admissions activities are carried out in partnership between different functions within the College. As such, responsibility for different aspects of recruitment and admissions are shared between Curriculum and Business Services teams within the College.

The Admissions Team works closely with curriculum areas and Course Tutors to deliver a comprehensive and professional service to all applicants. Overall responsibility for the admissions of prospective applicants onto a particular programme rests with the Curriculum Leader. However, such authority is generally devolved to the Course Tutor.

3.2 Admissions Team:

During the application process the Admissions Team will be responsible for:

- Liaising with applicants throughout the admissions process
- Processing and communicating all formal decisions to applicants
- Inviting applicants to interview and/or advice sessions and open days
- Liaising with curriculum and academic staff regarding admissions and applicants
- Refer applicants with declared learning support needs to the Student Support Team

3.3 Curriculum Staff:

During the application process the Curriculum and Academic Staff will be responsible for:

- Providing information for applicants about courses and studying at DNCG
- Make admissions decisions on applicants, or where decision making is delegated or shared with non-subject specialist staff, make decisions for borderline or nonstandard applicants
- Conducting advice and guidance sessions and interviews (where required) and meetings with applicants
- Refer applicants with declared learning support needs to the Student Support Team

3.4 **Employer Engagement Team:**

During the application process the Employer Engagement Team will be responsible for:

- Accepting referrals from admissions for applicants interested in apprenticeships
- Providing information for applicants about apprenticeship programmes, applications, vacancies and employer expectations
- Keeping applicants up to date with current employer apprenticeship opportunities
- Referring successful applicants to curriculum in a timely manner to ensure initial assessment and enrolment is completed within 2 weeks of the apprentices start date

3.5 **Careers Team:**

During the application process the Careers Team will:

- Be available to support applicants with information, advice and guidance at all stages throughout their application process. This may be with the dedicated careers team, or with course tutors as part of an interview as appropriate.

3.6 **Safeguarding:**

During the application process the Safeguarding Team (nominated member of staff) will be responsible for:

- Conducting offenders/criminal conviction assessments
- Liaise with external agencies if deemed appropriate
- Liaise with the Admissions Team regarding updates to the applicant's applications
- Liaise with the Curriculum Leader regarding the outcome of any assessments for applicants if deemed appropriate

4 **Definitions and/or Relevant Legislation**

4.1 Definitions:

- SEND - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- EHCP - Education, Health and Care Plan

4.2 Relevant legislation:

- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974

5 **The Policy**

Admissions Principles

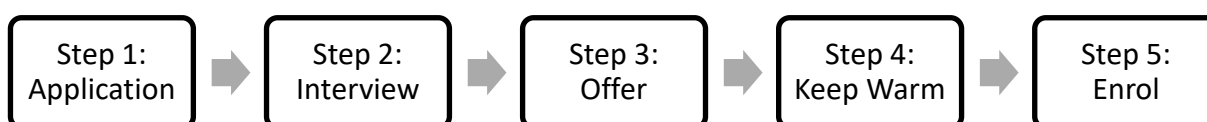
DNCG will ensure that a student's choice of course is aligned to their 'career aspirations' and suitable for their ability. The key principles which underpin the admissions process are to:

- Operate a 'student first' approach throughout and is consistent with DNCG's commitment to equality and diversity
- Offer impartial Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance to all students with careers at the centre of everything we do including where appropriate signposting to other appropriate opportunities (internal and external)

- Guarantee all students are considered for a place based on their individual abilities and recognises that student potential is not always demonstrated merely by formal academic qualifications
- Support all students in raising their aspirations for learning, employment and independence
- Widen participation in post 16 education to support all students from all backgrounds to engage in education
- Ensure that all students are treated fairly within an open and transparent admissions process
- Gain feedback from our potential students to evaluate and improve the service
- Foster effective partnership working between curriculum teams and business services to deliver outstanding interview, keeping warm activities and enrolment events

Admissions Journey

Procedures for different types of courses may vary. The flow chart below sets out the top-level procedure which applicants can expect through their admissions journey, further details are outlined in Appendix 1 Admissions Journey.



Progression Students

All DNCG current full-time students will be advised of the College progression application process and criteria during tutorials with their Course Tutor who will also outline their progression pathway options. This will be recorded on ProMonitor by the Course Tutor; students will not need to submit a separate application form.

Where a student is moving to a new subject area then the admissions team will arrange an interview with the new Course Tutor and will be subject to the admissions process as outlined in this policy.

Where a student is staying in the same subject area but moving to a higher level or bigger qualification, the student will be offered an “unconditional offer” for the new course.

Reasons for not offering an applicant a place at College

On some occasions, DNCG may not be able to offer a place to an applicant. In these situations, DNCG will do everything possible to find a suitable alternative for the applicant. The following are examples of reasons why applicants may not be offered a place on a course:

- The applicant does not meet the entry criteria and it is therefore unlikely that they would succeed in, or benefit from, attending the course, **an alternative course should be found within DNCG**
- The applicant has provided false or misleading information
- The applicant does not have the right to stay and study in the UK
- Following a full investigation (including Disclosure and Barring Service checks) the applicant is found to be unsuitable to work with relevant groups needed to achieve the desired course
- DNCG has reason to believe that the applicant’s presence is likely to endanger other students and/or staff

- The provision of the necessary facilities and support would place an unjustifiable demand upon DNCG resources
- The applicant has previously been excluded from DNCG; **however this would need to be explored to see if the reason for exclusion still stands and is relevant**
- The applicant has outstanding tuition fee debt

Applicants with Additional Support Needs

DNCG welcomes applications from applicants requiring additional support on their chosen course.

Applicants who declare an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will be given the opportunity to name DNCG as their preferred choice of post sixteen education after due consultation with all interested parties.

DNCG will engage with the Local Authority EHCP consultation process as set out in the SEND Code of Practice (January 2015) and will provide information to the Local Authority as to the College's ability to meet the educational support needs of the young person. A positive confirmation of this will not necessarily mean that DNCG is offering an applicant a place to study, and applicants will still be required to follow the application and interview process set out in this policy.

Applicants without an EHCP are encouraged to disclose any support needs on their application form as this will allow the ALS Team to begin reviewing what support can be provided and allow this support to be discussed at the initial interview stage.

Additional or Specialist Support Interviews

Where an applicant has either indicated on their application form or been identified during the admissions process as possibly requiring additional or specialist support, but does not hold an EHCP, this information will be passed to the ALS Team for review and if required a specialist interview with the appropriate person will be arranged.

Disclosure of Criminal Convictions

- A key part of our duty of care towards students and staff is we ask enrolling students to self-declare if they have a relevant criminal conviction and a relevant violent or sexual caution on the application form.
- Students must respond either Yes or No to both of these questions.
- Having a criminal conviction will not automatically stop someone from enrolling on a course with DNCG, however it must be appropriately assessed before a person is accepted onto any course.
- All self-declarations will be treated sensitively, and any relevant data will be stored in line with GDPR requirements.
- All self-declarations will be assessed according to the principles of the *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974* and with regards to suitability for the student's attendance on their chosen course and / or suitability for a future career or job.
- Any student who self-declares will be contacted by an approved nominated member of staff and will be asked to share information about the offence(s), including date and sentence received.
- Approved nominated members of staff include members of the Safeguarding teams and the Head of Safeguarding & Prevent.
- DNCG have a risk assessment table which will inform the overall outcome, ensuring a fair and consistent assessment for all students.
- If a conviction is declared, the details will only be shared on a need to know basis and the student will be informed of who this will include.

- For all assessed outcomes, Admissions will be informed only of the outcome and whether the application can proceed to student status or be stopped.
- Should a student not self-declare, and then reveals a conviction after they have been fully enrolled, this may jeopardise their place on the course, or any other courses provided by DNCG.
- If deemed appropriate, based on the nature of offence and sentence given, DNCG reserve the right to share relevant information regarding students with external agencies, such as the police, Public Protection Units (PPU), Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO) or the Probation Service.
- Any information shared with external agencies will be done so in line with safeguarding and GDPR principles.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks for Students

- When appropriate and required for a student's work experience placement as a key element of their course, a DBS check will be undertaken to ensure their suitability for the anticipated placement.
- The DBS Check will be completed securely via eSafeguarding and in line with GDPR requirements.
- If any convictions or concerns appear on the DBS certificate, they will be assessed in line with the overall criminal conviction process listed earlier.
- If a conviction appears on a DBS check that has not previously been declared, this may jeopardise the student's place on the course, or any other courses provided by DN Colleges Group.
- The DBS Certificate, when issued, remains the property of the student and must be shown to a member of the curriculum team. The appropriate details (i.e. date of issue and certificate number) will be kept on file.

Entry Requirements

Progression onto courses at DNCG depends on a variety of specific requirements of each Programme of Study as well as an individual's previous experience which allows the College to assess an applicant's suitability for a chosen subject this will all be discussed during the interview process. The table in Appendix 2 gives a guide about what GCSE's or other qualifications (e.g. Level 2 BTEC's) an applicant might be expected to have to be able to enrol on a particular level of course.

Please note for some courses, the content is at a higher level of English, Maths or Science, or requires particular technical skills, so the entry requirements could be higher than outlined. Applicants will be advised of these entry requirements during the interview and will be checked at enrolment stage. For creative/performing arts courses a portfolio or audition may be required.

Applications for apprenticeship programmes will include criteria relating to academic suitability and will be made in collaboration with the Employer who has offered the employment opportunity.

Some programmes have non-academic admissions requirements, this could be for example a DBS check. The College will apply sector and awarding body requirements for non-academic admissions requirements. Where these apply, they will be indicated on the course information on the College's website.

An applicant's previous qualifications will be checked at enrolment to confirm the actual course being studied, this will also include Maths and English grades.

Maths & English

Whatever course an applicant chooses to study at DNCG, they will be supported to maintain a good standard of English and Maths. It is also a government requirement that all full-time students aged 16-19 and 19-24 with an EHCP who have not achieved a pass at Grade 4 or above in maths and English GCSE by the time they finish secondary school must continue to study the subjects whilst at college. Improving a student's level of English (both written and spoken) as well as their understanding of maths will help them throughout their work and life, and we will support all student's to do this.

Appeals (relating to an admissions decision)

If an applicant is unsuccessful, DNCG will provide a reason why their application has been declined. The Applicant may want to appeal the decision relating to their application for a course, if they feel the decision was made unfairly. The application appeals process only applies to those students who have gone through the admissions process.

An appeal under the Admissions Policy will be accepted if the applicant indicates one of the following:

- the decision maker did not take relevant information into account and this has resulted to an incorrect or unfair decision being reached
- there is evidence of prejudice or bias relating to an equality and diversity issue and this has influenced the outcome
- there is evidence that procedural irregularities have occurred

Any appeals against the application process must be supported by evidence that demonstrates how the entry criteria are have been met or provides any mitigating circumstances such as long-term illness affecting examination results.

All appeals must be received by DNCG within 10 working days of receipt of outcome of interview. Appeals must be submitted to the Head of Student Services who will liaise with the relevant FE Director.

However, if applicants are still dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal, then they may use the College complaints procedure.

6 Relevant Policies and Procedures

Higher Education Admissions Policy
Complaints Policy

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Admissions Journey
Appendix 2: Entry Requirement Guide
Appendix 3: Guidance for staff on interviews with prospective students

7 Who to contact with Queries

Any queries regarding the contents of this Policy should be forwarded to one of the following:

Admissions Team North Lindsey College

Tel: 01724 294030

Email: admissions@northlindsey.ac.uk

Admissions Team Doncaster College

Tel: 0800 358 7575

Email: centraladmissions@don.ac.uk

8 Communication

8.1 The policy will be communicated via the College(s) Intranet, Email, Face to Face sessions.

9 Authorisation

Policy Holder: Director of Digital & Information

Approval Committee: Senior Leadership Team

Approval Date: 23 June 2021

Next Review Date: 23 June 2024

Appendix 1 – Admissions Journey

DNCG recruits' students in a variety of ways, through a portfolio of information and recruitment opportunities such as School liaison activities, College open days, taster days, interviews, Lincs2/Lincs4U application system and progression activities for existing students as well during the main enrolment period.

Information regarding the admissions journey will be regularly updated on the College's website with regards to specific open days and enrolment activities.

Courses offered within DNCG will be categorised into one of the following three types:

- Application
- Enquiry
- Direct Enrolment

The above category will be displayed against the course information on the College website(s).

All potential students for full-time FE and for Apprenticeships will need to apply and be invited to attend an interview.

The admissions arrangements for part-time courses vary, as not all require an interview, the admission route will be displayed against the course information on the College website(s).

The admissions journey is outlined below:

Step 1: Application

Applicants should apply using the online application form on the College Website(s). For some schools with North Lincolnshire applications are made through the eProspectus application portal. For those applicants who are unable to apply online, applications can be made using the paper application form, which is available from the College.

If required support for applications can be provided via the Student Services team.

Step 2: Interview

Interview sessions may take place in person, telephone or online (via MS Teams).

All applicants for full-time and those identified part-time courses will be invited for an interview. Interviewers will offer impartial guidance at the interview.

The admissions team will ensure that all applicants receive a minimum of 5 working days' notice of an interview for a full-time course to allow them time to prepare.

Applicants will receive an automated text or email 48 hours prior to their interview as a reminder, allowing them to amend if needed.

The interview itself does not guarantee a place on the course applied for.

If applicants fail to attend a booked interview/appointment without letting the College know in advance, they will automatically have another appointment booked by the Admissions Team.

Any applicant who miss 2 interviews/appointments will be contacted to confirm if they wish to continue with their application, if no response is received applicants will have their application amended to withdrawn

and notification will be sent to the applicant. Applicants who have missed 2 interview/appointments will be followed up by the Marketing Team.

Where an applicant has applied for an Apprenticeship, they will also be required to apply for current vacancies identified in order to progress and be offered an Apprenticeship programme. For applicants aged 16-18 a full-time application will also be added as a backup, in case they do not find a placement before September.

Step 3: Offer and Acceptance

Following an application and interview, an applicant will receive one of the following next steps;

- **Unconditional Offer** – the unconditional offer is a guaranteed place within that “subject area” and not necessarily on a particular course, unless they can demonstrate they have already achieved the entry criteria for the course. The actual course will be confirmed at enrolment.
- **Referral for advice and guidance** – if the applicant is unsure if the course is correct for them following the interview the applicant will be referred to the Careers Team for Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance.

The college will only permit one primary offer to any applicant. This ensures that course availability and places are fair for all applicants. The only exception to this is where an applicant is holding an offer for both an apprenticeship and a place on a full-time course.

Applicants will have the option to accept their offer during the interview, if this is not done that offers will be sent out by the Admissions Team following attendance at the interview. A follow up text is sent after 5 days and then again after 10 days. Applicants must reply within 10 working days, either accepting or declining their offer of a place at DNCG.

Step 4: Keeping Warm Activities

Each year DNCG hosts events to help potential students stay up to date with our successes and to help make starting their journey with us as easy and exciting as possible.

To assist this, DNCG between the application/ interview and the enrolment activity, all applicants are encouraged to attend open days, drop in, attend taster sessions and are communicated with regularly by the College. Potential students are sent a variety of different information packs during this period in the runup to enrolment containing relevant information on their course and the College.

These activities are an opportunity for potential students to meet their Course Tutors and other students, but at the same time explore the College. We strongly encourage all invited applicants to attend. These activities may be campus-based or online.

Step 5: Enrolment

The College's full-time main enrolment events commence on GCSE results day (this is normally the 3rd Thursday in August). All applicants who have successfully received a course offer will be invited to enrol this will either be online or in person.

As part of the enrolment process applicants will be required to provide identification, qualification certificates (e.g. GCSE's) and enrolment / course related fees (if required).

Full enrolment details will be sent via email or text to all applicants and published on the College website(s) at the end of July beginning of August.

Late Applicants - Full Time Courses

Students who make late applications to study on a full-time course will be considered within the first 6 weeks of the beginning of the course. However, this will be dependent on key factors such as:

- Availability of places on the course;
- Type of course; and
- The student's ability to catch up with any missed learning and assessments.

Where an application is received after the 6 week period then the student will have a discussion with the Curriculum Leader to explore what the best suitable route available is so they are not disadvantaged.

Were required the student will be referred to the Careers Team to identify what the best route is for the applicant.

Late Enrolment – Full Time Courses

Those Students who enrol late (after the first 2 weeks of the course commencing) will be treated on a 1:1 basis to ensure that all enrolment administrative procedures are completed, this will be done by the relevant curriculum admin team. As the student must receive the same induction activities as those who commenced at the start date, this will include goals and expectations, etc.

All late enrollers will need to be highlighted to the appropriate Pastoral Coach as a late start, due to enrolling late they may be more at risk of early withdrawal, or unable to settle into the course. The Pastoral Coach should ensure that any extra tutorial sessions or support is provided, whilst also providing the student with appropriate College induction sessions to ensure that they receive a consistent and comprehensive induction.

Transfers

DNCG is committed to ensuring that students are happy on their chosen course, but we understand that sometimes individuals may want to change their course or career path.

During the induction period (which is usually the first 6 weeks for full-time courses), the College's "Swap Don't Drop" campaign is there to support students by providing additional Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance. During this time, if a suitable alternative course is identified and a place is available and both curriculum areas agree (current and new areas), it may be possible for the student to transfer courses. Students should be made aware that this could result in additional course or equipment fees to be paid.

Appendix 2 - Entry Requirement Guide Further Education Courses

Progression onto courses at DN Colleges depends on a variety of specific requirements of each Programme of Study as well as an individual's previous experience which allows the College to assess a student's suitability for a chosen subject this will all be discussed during the interview process. The table below gives a guide about what GCSE's or other qualifications (e.g. Level 2 BTEC's) you might be expected to have to be able to enrol on a particular level of course.

Please note: for some courses, the content is at a higher level of English, Maths or Science, or requires particular technical skills, so the entry requirements could be higher than outlined below. Students will be advised of these entry requirements during the interview and will be checked at enrolment stage. For creative/performing arts courses a portfolio or audition may be required.

Entry Level

Entry Requirements	Typical Duration	Types of Courses	Progression
No formal entry qualifications	1 year	Life Skills Entry Level Certificate/Diploma	Level 1 Courses



Level 1

Entry Requirements	Typical Duration	Types of Courses	Progression
At least 2 GCSEs at grade 1-2 or equivalent, including Entry Level qualifications	1 year	Level 1 Diploma Traineeship	Full-time Level 2 course or Immediate Apprenticeship



Level 2

Entry Requirements	Typical Duration	Types of Courses	Progression
At least 2 GCSEs at Grade 3 or above, including maths or English at Grade 3 or above or equivalent OR Minimum of Level 1 course in chosen subject and English language and Maths at Level 1	1 year	Level 2 Diploma Intermediate Apprenticeship	Full-time Level 3 course or Intermediate / Advanced Apprenticeship



Level 3

Entry Requirements	Typical Duration	Types of Courses	Progression
At least 4 or 5 GCSEs at Grade 4 or above, including maths and English at Grade 4 OR Minimum of Level 2 course in chosen and English language and Maths at level 2	1-2 years	Level 3 Diploma Level 3 Extended Diploma Advanced Apprenticeship	University Vocational Level 4 and higher courses Higher Apprenticeship Employment

T- Levels

We offer T-Levels in the following subject areas:

- Digital Production, Design and Development
- Education and Childcare
- Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction
- Health

Entry Requirements	Typical Duration	Types of Courses	Progression
<p>At least 4 or 5 GCSE's at grade 4 or above with English and Maths at Grade 5</p> <p><i>Additional if you are studying the Health Subject you will need a GCSE Grade 4 or above in Science</i></p> <p>OR Minimum of Level 2 course in chosen subject and English and Maths at Grade 5</p>	2 years	Level 3 Technical Qualification	<p>University</p> <p>Vocational Level 4 and higher courses</p> <p>Higher Apprenticeship</p> <p>Employment</p>

Progressing Students - to the next level of study

Entry Requirements	Typical Duration	Types of Courses	Progression
<p>Once you successfully completed your current course you may be able to progress to the next level of study, following a satisfactory progression meeting with your Course Tutor</p> <p>If you've finished your Level 3 course you will be offered appropriate advice and guidance from our Careers Team on how to apply to University through UCAS, or how to apply for a job or an Apprenticeship</p>	As above for the different Levels	As above for the different Levels	As above for the different Levels

Maths & English

Whatever course you choose to study at DN Colleges Group, you will be supported to maintain a good standard of English and Maths. It is also a government requirement that all full-time students aged 16-19 and 19-24 with an EHCP who have not achieved a pass at Grade 4 or above in maths and English GCSE by the time they finish secondary school must continue to study the subjects whilst at college. Improving your level of English (both written and spoken) as well as your understanding of maths will help you throughout your work and life and we will support you to do this.

Appendix 3 - Guidance for staff on interviews with prospective students

The purpose of the interview is to:

- provide information about the College;
- provide information about courses within the chosen curriculum area(s);
- assess the suitability of a course in terms of the applicant's whole profile which considers the applicants individual abilities and recognises that student potential is not always demonstrated merely by formal academic qualifications and takes cognisance of their aspirations, career goals, motivation and personal attributes;
- allow applicants to ask questions to enable them to assess suitability of the course for their needs;
- provide information about further options within College where appropriate;
- establish the appropriate level of course for the applicant based on predicted qualifications or qualifications achieved;
- ensure that the applicant understands the content of their entire course, including all elements of the study programme where appropriate (to include work experience);
- ensure that the applicant understands potential progression routes;
- ensure that the applicant understands College expectations of their conduct and engagement whilst on programme;
- provide the applicant with further opportunity to disclose support needs of any kind and discuss a support package;
- inform the applicant of any fees, exam fees and any associated course costs e.g. for equipment, clothing, books, study trips etc.;
- enable the interviewer to direct the applicant to additional College services where required, e.g. Financial Support, Careers Guidance, Additional Support.

At interview all applicants are entitled to:

- an interview with a positive, welcoming and informed member of staff;
- accurate and clear information with referrals to College services as required;
- appropriate professional discussion relating to their current application and destination goals;
- be accompanied to interview by a parent, carer or other appropriate adult where necessary and if required;
- be treated fairly and not disadvantaged on the basis of any protected characteristic.