

Admissions and Progression Policy

2023 - 2026

1. CONTEXT

Coleg Sir Gar and Coleg Ceredigion (hereafter the College) are further education colleges that are part of the University of Wales: Trinity Saint David Group. The College operates on 7 campuses across south west Wales and in workplace and community settings. The College offers a broad range of academic and vocational education and training programmes ranging from Entry to Graduate level.

2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The Admission and Progression Policy sets out:

- the principles and processes used to admit learners to programmes of study and;
- the requirements for the progression of learners once within the College.

3. POLICY DEVELOPMENT

This policy has been developed at Senior Management level and approved by the College Executive and Board of Directors.

This policy has been subject to an Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

4. ADMISSIONS AND PROGRESSION POLICY STATEMENTS

Equality of Opportunity

The College strives to be fully accessible and inclusive ensuring that an applicant for a programme of study receives neither less favourable treatment on the grounds of: age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership, responsibility for dependants, socio-economic status, nor is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

The College promotes accessible and flexible provision and provides opportunities for all in Further, Higher Education and Work Based Learning.

Welsh Language

The College acts in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards.

It welcomes applications through Welsh or English, delivers a range of programmes that serve the needs of learners with Welsh language skills and provides a Welsh ethos and culture within the College.

The college promotes Welsh-medium and bilingual learning. Bilingualism is reflected in its ethos and the way it runs its courses. Learners will be introduced to bilingualism in many forms and will be given the opportunity and encouraged to partake in bilingual activities and Welsh language assessment within the classroom as well as social and cultural events throughout the academic year.

5. APPLICATIONS FROM LEARNERS WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS

Applications from learners with additional learning needs are considered on the same grounds as all others, however, applicants are asked to discuss support needs with the College in advance to allow a reasonable time to ensure any required support is in place. It is the responsibility of the learner to inform the College of any additional learning needs and/or disabilities known at application, interview and/or enrolment (or as soon as diagnosed once enrolled). When the college receives the information, it will be assessed by the ALN team and it may result in an ALN panel (ALNCo, ALN Campus Co-Ordinator and Curriculum Manager) meeting being convened to assess whether the College can meet the additional learning needs of the learner by either is Universal or Additional Learning Provision. The College will provide advice regarding the suitability of programmes and the equipment and/or support available. In a small number of cases, the College may ask candidates who have experienced a recent, recurring, or serious health problem, to request a medical or other report(s) from relevant agencies regarding their condition, such as a health plan. These reports do not form part of the selection process and will not be available to anyone except the College's Learner Services staff.

The College's Senior Leadership Team is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the College is able to make adequate provision for learners with additional needs and/or disabilities and for keeping a record of the exceptional cases where a candidate is refused admission on the grounds of the relevant additional support not being available.

6. REFERENCES AND OTHER CHECKS FOR ALL POTENTIAL LEARNERS

The College is committed to supporting learner wellbeing and will refer to the 'Fitness to Study Policy' should there be any concerns regarding a potential learner's safety and wellbeing and/or any possible impact on the safety and well-being of other potential learners.

The College will require a formal Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for applicants to some programmes. This will be made known to applicants well in advance. The outcome of this process will be taken into consideration when deciding about admitting an individual to one of these programmes.

The College reserves the right:

- to request a reference for any potential learner.
- to carry out police checks on any applicant. The outcome of such a process will be taken into consideration when deciding about admitting an individual to the College (see terms and conditions Annex 1).
- to refuse admission to applicants who have convictions that have not been spent or can never become spent. This procedure may also be invoked where information is available concerning activities outside the law or the expression of beliefs, which prima facie present a clear and immediate danger of infraction of the law.
- to refuse admission to an applicant who has previously been excluded from this or another education institution.
- not to admit an applicant who has outstanding debts to the College.
- not to admit an individual who has previously attended this or another education establishment and not completed courses, including all external assessments.
- not to admit an applicant where there is evidence that they could be a threat or danger to others.

Applications falling within the above categories will be considered by an Admissions Panel of Senior Management representatives including Faculty representation.

7. INTERNATIONAL LEARNERS

The College has a limited number of places for International Learners and accepts applications annually. Learners must normally have an IELTS score of 4.5 or above to be considered for L3 entry and a minimum IELTS score of 5.5 to be considered for entry at L4 or above.

International learners may only be considered for entry to programmes that are full time in nature and at level 3 or above. All international learners must apply in the first instance to the College using the College application form. Successful learners will be formally accepted by the College, but, thereafter, international learners will have to satisfy the UKVI Home Office requirements in order to gain an appropriate visa to study at the College.

Overseas qualifications may be used for entry, provided that they are considered equivalent to the requirements of the particular programme being applied for. International learners will be advised in writing of fee requirements and payment methods, well in advance of the start of their programme.

8. ADMISSION OF LEARNERS UNDER THE AGE OF 16

Learners under the age of 16 will not normally be permitted admission to courses at the College or those delivered on behalf of the College under a third-party arrangement. The only exceptions may be where learners are:

- attending 14-19 Network Partnership programmes that are supported by the College, local schools and the Local Education Authority;
- exceptional programmes approved for funding by Welsh Government; or
- a specific commercial course or fee paying extra-curricular course that permits the admission of learners under the age of 16.

9. APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications should normally be completed online as early as possible within the current academic year for entry in the following academic year. As part of the application process, learners will be asked to sign up to the College's terms and Conditions for Admission - see Appendix 1.

Prospective learners should be aware that there is very high demand for some programmes and a limited number of places. These will be filled on a first come first served basis. The College may establish waiting lists for certain programmes and offer places as and when they become available.

10. ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Normally, the level of an individual programme, will determine the entry requirements. However, it should be noted that these are minimum and general requirements and specific entry requirements may also apply, e.g., the consideration of a portfolio in Art and Design or an audition in Performing Arts. Applicants will be informed of any specific requirements for a programme at an early stage in the application process. This information is also available on the College Website and within the College prospectuses. In exceptional circumstances, applicants who do not meet the normal entry requirements for a particular course may be given a place subject to specified conditions. These conditions will be made explicit to the applicant. A decision to admit an applicant under these circumstances will be at the discretion of the relevant Faculty Management Team, the Principal or nominee.

FURTHER EDUCATION

Introduction

Learners in post-16 education across Wales study learning programmes rather than just a main qualification. There are several elements to a learning programme which may include:

- Main Qualification(s);
- Core (Skills, GCSEs or Skills Challenge Certificate);
- Community, learner, industry focussed additional qualifications;
- Non-accredited learning;
- Work experience or Work-Related Education.

Learning programmes will be individualised for each learner and progress on these will be monitored through tutorials.

Qualifications

Level 3 Vocational Qualifications

Learners who wish to study a vocational qualification at Level 3, will normally be expected to have achieved a minimum of five GCSEs at grade A*-C or to have successfully completed a vocational qualification at level 2 and undertaken a successful progression interview.

Progression will depend on the College's assessment of an individual and their ability to succeed on the course. To gain entry into Year 2 of a Level 3 vocational learning programme learners must demonstrate successful completion of the prescribed elements of their chosen learning programme as designated by the relevant faculty.

AS / A Levels

Learners who wish to study a full time AS / A level programme will normally be expected to have achieved a minimum of six GCSEs at grades A* - C that include at least a grade C in Mathematics English Language or First Language Welsh. Learners should also be aware of individual AS and AL subject requirements.

Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC)

This is an A Level equivalent course, graded A* - E and it is studied alongside all A Level and some level 3 vocational courses. It has the same UCAS points as a full A Level and is designed to develop and progress learners' skills in Literacy; Numeracy; Digital Literacy; Personal Effectiveness; Planning and Organisation; Critical Thinking; Creativity and Innovation and Problem Solving. A key element of the SCC is the Individual Study, giving learners an opportunity to undertake an in-depth research project into an area of interest or aspirational career path. The SCC at level 3 is a graded qualification and carries the same UCAS points as an A Level.

Access to Higher Education Programmes

Access to Higher Education Diplomas provide preparation for higher education (HE). They address the particular needs of adults who may have left school early or been out of education for a number of years. Learners will be expected to undertake an interview having previously acquired Mathematics and English GCSE at Grade C or above, and GCSE Science for the Health pathway, or having completed a Skills for Further Study/Pre-access course. These assessments will indicate whether a learner has sufficient skills to embark on an access programme or firstly needs to undertake a Pre Access-preparatory programme. Applications from learners who have already achieved Level 4 Qualifications will be assessed by the Access Admissions Panel.

Level 2 Vocational Qualifications

At Level 2, there are different entry requirements for different learning programmes. Normally, learners who want to study a vocational qualification at Level 2, will be expected to have achieved at least 4 GCSEs, A*- D grades, or to have successfully completed a vocational qualification at level 1. However, it should be noted that the attainment of a vocational qualification at level 1 does not automatically qualify a learner to progress to a level 2 course. Progression will also depend on the College's assessment of an individual and their ability to succeed on the course.

Level 1 Vocational Qualifications

Learners who want to study a full-time vocational qualification at Level 1 will normally have successfully completed an Entry level qualification, a Certificate of Education or achieved GCSEs at grades D to G. However, it should be noted that the attainment of any of the above courses does not automatically qualify a learner to progress to a level 1 course. This will be assessed through a progression interview. Specific entry requirements for each course can be located on the College Website.

Entry Level Qualifications

No formal qualifications are required. Entry is subject to successful interview and on the College's assessment of an individual and their ability to succeed on the course. Discrete programmes of study at entry level can provide taster opportunities in vocational areas as well as developing independent living skills.

Essential Skills Qualifications (ESQ)

The College is committed to providing opportunities for learners to further develop their life skills (particularly in literacy and numeracy) to aid progression to higher levels of learning, employment or self-employment. ESQs are available in Communication, Application of Number and Digital Literacy are provided from level 1 to Level 3. All full time and substantial part time learners (i.e., studying more than 5 hours per week) will undergo a basic skills diagnostic test on entry to the College. This may lead to further diagnostic tests if necessary.

Levels

Generally, there are a number of different academic and vocational qualifications available from Entry level to Level 3. These range from the more traditional GCSE, A level and Vocational qualifications to more specialised subject related awarding qualifications and more competence-based workplace NVQs.

Level 3 (A Level equivalent level)

These advanced courses provide you with detailed knowledge, understanding and skills in a subject or vocational related industry course. Level 3 courses are designed to enable you to progress to university or employment.

Level 2 (GCSE equivalent level)

Courses at this level build on your knowledge and skills. They provide you with a good knowledge understanding and skills in a subject or industry.

Level 1

These are introductory courses that develop your skills and understanding of a subject, industry or area of work. In some areas, e.g., where you are required to develop significant practical skills, it may be necessary for you to start at level 1 regardless of your previous GCSE or A Level results.

Entry Level

These are basic courses that help build confidence, knowledge, understanding and skills and will help improve your English and Maths skills.

HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

All of the College's higher education programmes are validated by The University of Wales Trinity Saint David. As a part of the University, the College is expected to apply the principles of the Higher Education Student Admissions Policy, details of which can be found on the University website. The policy and associated procedures comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR 2016, relevant equality and diversity legislation affecting the admissions of learners, and take account of sectoral best practice.

All learners must meet the minimum entry requirements specified for each higher education programme. Full time entry requirements are provided in detail on the UCAS website under C22 Coleg Sir Gar/Carmarthenshire College <https://www.ucas.com>. All full-time undergraduate applications must be made through UCAS.

Part-time undergraduate course applications should be made using the College application system. Applications are welcomed from applicants who have the capacity to participate, together with the interest and motivation to succeed in higher education. The decision to admit a learner will be taken on individual merit, demonstrated through the application process to include:

- Personal statements;
- Appropriate references;
- Interview and consideration of portfolio where appropriate;
- Academic potential;
- Assessment of prior achievement, whether by reference to academic or vocational qualifications, or prior experience described more broadly;
- Ability to benefit from participation.

Applicants with specific learning difficulties or other needs are encouraged and advised to seek further advice from the college. Applications are considered on a fair basis regardless of disability or any other prejudice including age, sex or race. The Fitness to Study Policy is available as a point of reference when considering the safety and well - being of all applicants to Higher Education programmes.

An applicant who has a relevant criminal conviction is required to state this on the application form. 'Relevant' is defined as offences against the person, whether of a violent or sexual nature, offences involving the use of Class A drugs and offences relating to the supply of controlled drugs or substances where the conviction concerns commercial drug dealing or trafficking. Convictions that are spent (as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) are not considered to be relevant. All such applications are assessed on an individual basis.



APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMMES

An apprenticeship is a job with training, which allows learners to gain recognised qualifications and essential skills, whilst working and earning a wage. Apprenticeships are designed by employers to reflect the current market and industry needs and offer a structured programme which provides apprentices with the skills needed to do the job well. Apprentices study technical skills and carry out practical assessments.

As employees, apprentices work alongside experienced staff to gain job-specific skills and receive training, usually on a day-release basis, to complete nationally recognised qualifications. Apprenticeships can take between one and four years to complete depending on the level, the apprentice's ability and the industry sector needs. Apprentices are normally paid minimum wage; however, many apprentices earn significantly more.

Type of Apprenticeship Equivalent Qualification	
What are the benefits of an Apprenticeship? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earn a salary while training • Get paid holidays • Receive expert training • Gain nationally recognised qualifications • Develop job-specific skills • Start a career from the outset 	
Type	Equivalent to
Foundation Apprenticeship: Apprentices work towards knowledge and competence-based qualifications at Level 2 (such as an NVQ Level 2) together with Essential Skills.	Equivalent to five good GCSE passes.
Apprenticeship: Apprentices work towards knowledge and competence-based qualifications at Level 3 (such as an NVQ Level 3) together with Essential Skills.	Equivalent to two A-level passes.
Higher Apprenticeship: Apprentices work towards knowledge and competence-based qualifications at Level 4/5 (such as an NVQ Level 4 or above) together with Essential Skills.	Equivalent to a HNC/HND or Foundation Degree level and above.

Application

Anyone aged over 16 years and not in full-time education can apply, but must be in employed status in a contracted job for over 30 hours per week. All candidates have to apply to an employer directly, just like any other job.

Entry Requirements

Entry requirements are flexible because apprenticeships are not just based on academic achievement. Practical skills and the level of interest demonstrated are all considered. Candidates must be in

employment to undertake an Apprenticeship; however, an individual is not currently employed, the College can help to find suitable positions through the Apprenticeship Matching Service.

TRAINEESHIP PROGRAMMES

A Traineeship programme will give participants the support, skills and qualifications needed to progress into employment, an Apprenticeship or learning at a higher level.

Trainees:

- must be between 16-18 years old and have left school;
- will receive a training allowance for the Engagement and Level 1 programme (Engagement £30 per week and Level 1 £50 per week);
- must attend Engagement for 21 hours per week to receive £30 per week;
- must attend Level 1 for 37.5 hours per week to receive £50 per week;
- can also receive assistance with travel expenses
- attend an induction at the College to meet a training advisor, agree an individual learning plan and decide upon a work placement.

Those interested in the Traineeship programme, should make an appointment at their local Careers Wales office, where they will receive a guidance interview and if appropriate a referral onto the programme.

APPENDIX 1

Admission - Terms and Conditions for Applicants and Learners

When an applicant accepts an offer of a place at the Coleg Sir Gar / Coleg Ceredigion (hereafter the College) a contract is formed. Before accepting an offer, applicants must read the terms and conditions below.

Admissions and Enrolment - Policies, Procedures and Regulations

A place on a programme of study is subject to the applicant successfully completing the admission and enrolment process. The offer of a place, is subject to the terms and conditions specified in the following:

- the offer letter;
- and information on the College's website and in its prospectus; and
- the information contained in the Student Code of Conduct available at: xxxxx

It is important that applicants read these prior to accepting an offer and abide by them. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of an offer or the termination of a subsequent enrolment.

Data Protection and Processing

The information provided on an application will become part of the learner's record. By entering into a contract with the College, the applicant gives consent for the College to store and process personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016. The College's policy on data protection is available on the website.

Programmes of Study that are Subject to Approval

All new programmes of study at the College must be approved by an awarding body prior to delivery. If a programme is subject to approval, then the applicant will be informed in writing when the programme has been approved, and will also be informed of any changes made to the programme. If the programme is not approved, the College will try to find the applicant a place on another programme.

Offers

Any conditions attached to an offer, will be specified in the offer letter and in the correspondence received by the applicant.

An offer may be conditional or unconditional and conditions may be academic or non-academic. Academic conditions normally require an applicant to prove they have achieved certain qualifications. Non-academic conditions often require applicants to fulfill legal requirements for entry to a programme, e.g., obtaining a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or providing evidence required by UKVI Home Office.

In accepting an offer, applicants agree to the College's terms and conditions. After accepting an offer of a place, applicants will have 14 days during which time they may decline their offer if they change their minds.

Applicants who make Disclosure or Inform of Exclusion from the Previous Setting or from Coleg Sir Gar / Coleg Ceredigion

In compliance with College Safeguarding and Duty of Care arrangements, applicants are required to disclose details of any charges pending or any unspent criminal convictions. Any applicant who has answered yes to the question regarding unspent criminal convictions or any charges pending, will be sent a Disclosure Form to be completed and returned to the named contact within the Admissions team.

Applicants who wish to enrol on programmes where they will be required to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults, must disclose all convictions, cautions, reprimands, final warnings, bind-over orders and spent convictions at interview as they will be required to undertake an enhanced DBS.

Having a disclosure or being previously excluded from the College or previous provider, will not necessarily exempt a learner from joining a College programme. However, this will depend upon the nature of the programme applied for, the circumstances and background to the disclosure or exclusion, as well as an assessment of any risk posed to the institution under its Duty of Care, Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Security Policies and Positive Behaviour Policies.

The Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding will vet the returned Disclosure Form / Or Information from exclusion / final warning and either confirm potential admittance or refer the application to the Admissions Panel for consideration.

The Admissions Panel will consist of the Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding (or designated deputy) and Assistant Director of Curriculum or Head of Curriculum and the Wellbeing manager.

The Admissions Panel will consider whether:

- to admit the applicant on the basis of the evidence presented;
- to recommend continued exclusion or non-admittance due to the risks presented to the College under our 'Duty of Care', Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Positive Behaviour Policies.

Admittance Procedures Following the Admissions Panel Decision

Following admittance or re-admittance of excluded or 'at risk' learners, the Designated Senior Person will ensure that there is appropriate monitoring and review of the learners' performance in line with any conditions set on re-admittance.

The monitoring and compliance with these conditions will then be managed by an allocated member of staff as appropriate (for example a mentor or ALN specialist but will be dependent on need) who will advise the Designated Senior Person if a breach occurs.

Should a breach of a serious nature occur then the applicant will be referred back to the Admissions Panel under the terms of this Policy.

Following referral, the Admissions Panel will exercise the right to exclude the applicant, subject to ratification by the Vice Principal.

The Faculty Team will notify the applicant in writing of the exclusion.

Meeting the Terms of the Offer

Applicants who receive a conditional offer, subject to achieving particular qualifications, will need to provide evidence of those at enrolment. The College reserves the right to withdraw applicants or to defer their offer to the following year, if conditions have not been met by this time.

Changes to the Terms of an Offer

Unless required to do so by law, or to meet a new industry requirement, the terms of an offer will not be changed. In the unlikely event that it is necessary to change the terms of the offer, the applicant will be informed in writing and asked to agree to the changes.

Changes to a Programme of Study

An offer to study at the College, will be based on the latest information about the programme of study that can be found on the College's website, as at the date of acceptance of the offer. However, changes to programme information (including to the awarding body, programme title, description, content, study mode and/or location of delivery and/or timetable) may be necessary.

Changes to programmes may also need to be made where the minimum number of learners needed to run a programme effectively have not been met. Please note that in some exceptional circumstances, programmes may be withdrawn (prior to commencement) for this reason. If changes to your programme are made after you have accepted your offer, the College will take reasonable steps to notify you of those changes.

If your programme is withdrawn, or if fundamental changes are made after you have accepted your offer, the College will take reasonable steps to give you early notification and where applicable offer a suitable alternative programme. You will also be entitled to withdraw from your programme and apply for a refund or partial refund of any fees you have paid.

The Provision of Accurate Information from the Applicant

Applicants should ensure that the information that they provide to the College is true, complete and accurate. Applicants should contact Admissions if they need to inform the College of any changes to their personal details, such as their name or postal address. After enrolling as a learner, any change in personal details should be communicated via the campus offices.

If an application is found to contain false information, the College reserves the right not to enrol the applicant or to require the learner to withdraw from the programme of study. The same consequences will apply where an applicant has failed to disclose any material information that would affect the decision to offer a place, such as information relating to a relevant unspent criminal conviction, outlined in the section on criminal convictions below.

Health Requirements

Some programmes may require the applicant to complete a health questionnaire and undergo health screening checks as part of the admissions and enrolment process. Applicants will be informed in their offer letter if such health requirements apply.

International Applicants Requiring a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa

To study at the College, applicants must meet the visa and immigration conditions required by the UKVI, Home Office.

Support for Applicants with Disabilities or Additional Learning Needs

Applicants are encouraged to disclose any disability or additional learning needs as early as possible during the application process and throughout their time at the College. Applicants who have disclosed a disability on their application form will be contacted by Learner Services to discuss their support requirements.

With the applicant's explicit consent, disclosed information may be shared and used to determine reasonable adjustments and compensatory measures. Learners who decline to share information should be aware that this may limit the College's ability to ensure that appropriate and timely support arrangements are put in place.

Fees and Finance

Detailed information on fees can be found on the College's website. Learners are required to confirm as part of the enrolment process that they accept responsibility for the payment of fees, or other charges that they may incur while studying at the College. If a learner fails to pay tuition fees when they become due, and fail to make satisfactory arrangements for discharging any outstanding debt, the College reserves the right to commence legal proceedings to recover the debt. Learners that have outstanding tuition fee debts are not entitled to progress to the next year of studies.

Enrolment

Applicants to the College that receive an offer will be invited to enrol immediately before the start date of their course. At enrolment, applicants will be required to provide proof of ID in the form of a birth certificate, passport or driving licence; and satisfactory evidence of their qualifications in the form of an original transcript or certificate, or a copy certified by the issuing institution.

Appeals and Complaints

There may be occasions where applicants may wish to request an appeal of their application or wish to make a complaint about the admissions process. The College's complaints procedure can be viewed on the website.