



HE Admissions Policy

Policy Area: Higher Education

Policy Lead: Assistant Principal Hastings

Approval By: Executive

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. East Sussex College is committed to providing an environment for students that actively provides equity of opportunity, freedom from discrimination and values the diversity of all students and prospective students. East Sussex College seeks to broaden the pool of potential applicants by raising awareness and expectations in line with its commitment to widening participation.
- 1.2. East Sussex College aims to place its applicants on appropriate courses with the support necessary for them to succeed. The admissions process will encompass a range of services, from the provision of information about programmes and services, through to the point of enrolment and beyond.
- 1.3. This policy applies to applicants and potential applicants to East Sussex College's accredited higher education programmes of study and is complementary to the admissions policies of East Sussex College's validating bodies and university partners. It is intended that the policy should uphold the principles outlined in the [Schwartz Report on Fair Admissions \(2004\)](#), the [Office for Students' Regulatory Framework for HE in England Condition A2](#) and the [QAA UK Quality Code](#).
- 1.4. The college's higher education quality improvement plan (HE QIP) links the college's strategic aims with its policies and the UK Quality Code, thereby taking deliberate steps to embed enhancement throughout the student experience.

2. Widening participation

- 2.1. East Sussex College values highly the diversity and range of experience that prospective students contribute to college life. Applications are welcome from all students irrespective of background. Recruitment and admissions processes aim to match the abilities, aptitude, and aspirations of the student to their programme of study. East Sussex College offers Access programmes for mature students to increase confidence in academic study, in preparation for higher education. East Sussex College is committed to recruitment and admissions processes, which are fair, explicit, and implemented consistently across its range of provision.
- 2.2. There are barriers for some students considering entering into higher education, for example if they are disabled, a mature student without traditional qualifications, come from a Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) background or grew up in care. Other barriers may include being the first in the family to enter higher education or finding the cost of study prohibitive. The college's Schools Liaison team and HE curriculum teams also liaise with progression officers at local schools and internal Level 3 students to offer HE taster workshops, open days, information sessions, and skills workshops to inspire students to progress to higher education.
- 2.3. Close links with local universities enable students to attend university taster days and liaison with partnership development teams enables staff and students to access information and awareness around HE options.
- 2.4. East Sussex College measures student satisfaction, progress, participation, and performance through student questionnaires, programme feedback, involvement with the HE Group, student representative and Student Voice meetings, through an HE annual self-assessment report and regularly reports on these measures to the Governing Board and Executive team.

3. Tuition fees & student support

- 3.1. Tuition fees are reviewed annually and for 24/25 remain at £7,995 for full time courses and £3,997 for part time courses, which is significantly lower than local universities. Please refer to the college's Tuition & Other Fees Policy for further information.
- 3.2. The college provides bursaries of up to £500 in each year of study for students with a household income below £25,000, students from low participation HE areas, students who identify as BAME and students in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance. A bursary of £200 will be awarded for each of the above target groups a student falls in to, up to a maximum of £500.
- 3.3. The college also provides a hardship bursary. This bursary will be available for students with a household income below £25,000. Applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis according to need. Discretionary hardship bursaries will be awarded where a student demonstrates exceptional hardship that may be a barrier to learning and participation. The college may also provide supermarket vouchers to those in need of emergency assistance. This hardship bursary is set aside for those in greatest financial hardship to support them with the ongoing costs of being at college. A student may receive support in the form of a bursary or supermarket vouchers twice per academic year.
- 3.4. There is a bespoke HE induction and specific ongoing group tutorial provision to support students transitioning into higher education which includes study skills, time management, e-resources, health & safety, safeguarding & Prevent, HE support services, and programme of study. A dedicated HE Academic & Wellbeing Advisor is available at the college to provide one-on-one and group support in accessing online learning resources and understanding the Harvard Referencing system. All HE students can access this support. The college's Student Services team offers access to additional learning support and helps support students with a range of issues, including emotional, family, financial or health related. There is a Student Services staff member who act a liaison between the college and the HE department to help students identify available internal and external support.

4. Provision of information for students

- 4.1. Information and advice about programmes and entry requirements is provided on the East Sussex College website and UCAS application website, with further information available from tutors on request if required. Every care is taken to ensure that the information contained in the college's publications (both paper and online) is accurate at the time of publication. However, in response to changing circumstances, the college reserves the right to cancel, change the entry criteria for, or alter, the content of any programme. Where this is necessary, applicants will be advised at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.2. The Student Services team provides information, advice and guidance on all aspects of applications, programmes and funding and guide students to further support when required. The team actively engages with Level 3 progression both internally and externally.

5. Additional Learning Support needs

- 5.1. [Disabled Students' Allowance](#) (DSA) is a student-initiated process as part of the applicant's Student Finance application. DSA is assessed, awarded and allocated by internal and external providers to support the individual student's needs. The college has dedicated HE mentors to support students.
- 5.2.
- 5.3. In addition, at enrolment, students have the opportunity to declare that they may require

additional support when completing their learning agreement as part of the compulsory registration and enrolment process. All students who apply to East Sussex College and declare a learning need and/or physical disability are referred to a member of the Additional Learning Support team, who will contact potential students to identify any support required. Disabled students can also be supported in completing their DSA application by the Additional Learning Support team.

- 5.4. Once a DSA application is processed, an assessment completed, and an award made, the applicant will receive a report listing equipment and other support they can be provided with on their course.
- 5.5. If students are awarded DSA, they may be assisted with the costs of:
 - 5.5.1. Specialist equipment, for example a computer if needed due to disability;
 - 5.5.2. Non-medical helpers;
 - 5.5.3. Extra travel costs due to disability;
 - 5.5.4. Other disability-related costs of studying.
- 5.6. More information regarding the DSA process and application can be found [here](#).

6. Diversity, equity & inclusion – student success

- 6.1. The college's PRIDE values support the principles of equal opportunities and oppose discrimination. Inequity or discrimination within the college community, based on protected characteristics (age, sex, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity) will not be tolerated. East Sussex College recognises that discrimination may occur due to other non-protected characteristics, such as a person's socio-economic status, which are not explicitly protected by the Equality Act 2010 but to which the college will also take a zero-tolerance approach. Please refer to the college's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policy for further information.
- 6.2. East Sussex College is committed to supporting students with a range of needs and abilities. The college makes courses and facilities accessible to all students and provides a variety of services, including advocacy for students.
- 6.3. Feedback from students, some who have nontraditional entry qualifications compared to universities and other higher education institutions, is central to the college's education strategy. Feedback from the HE induction and end of year surveys, unit/module evaluations, Student Voice meetings and student representatives' meetings are used to improve student experience.
- 6.4. Data is sourced from student learning agreements and disseminated to identify diversity within student groups including information on race, sex, age, disability, and previous qualifications. Retention is carefully and continuously monitored throughout the year to identify and offer further support to students where required. Small class sizes provide strong pastoral support for students and there are regular tutorials offered in both groups and on an individual basis. Destination data is obtained from Graduate Outcomes surveys.

7. Admissions policy

- 7.1. The admissions process will provide a responsive and student-focused service, ensuring all applicants receive the appropriate advice, guidance and information that they need to apply for and enrol on the right programme.
- 7.2. All prospective applicants will have access to impartial pre-entry advice, guidance and information about programmes, fees and funding so that informed decisions can be made. Applicants should ensure that they have sufficient information on which to base decisions

- about programme acceptance and necessary support.
- 7.3. The admissions process for entry onto programmes will be clear and concise to prospective students.
 - 7.4. All applicants will be considered on an equal basis, taking into account their academic record, potential, references, personal statement and experience.
 - 7.5. The admissions process recognises that not all applicants have had equality of educational opportunity and East Sussex College will consider applicants in the light of the opportunities available to them.
 - 7.6. Programmes and services will be promoted actively in the community to widen access and increase participation.
 - 7.7. The admissions process will have procedures which will enable the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of the provision.
 - 7.8. The Admissions Policy will promote diversity, equity & inclusion and will be consistent with and complementary to all other college policies.
 - 7.9. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide full and accurate information as part of the admissions process and to notify East Sussex College of any changes or corrections to their original application.
 - 7.10. The policy will be implemented in the following way:
 - 7.10.1. The admissions process is clearly outlined on the East Sussex College website and due care and attention will be taken to ensure that all communications to potential students are clear and unambiguous.
 - 7.10.2. Accurate information and advice about programmes and entry requirements will be provided on the East Sussex College website.
 - 7.10.3. All prospective students who declare a learning difficulty or disability will be advised of the support available to them, including the process for applying for Disabled Students' Allowance.
 - 7.10.4. Guidance is available to students interested in entering into higher education from the Admissions team. The HE curriculum team is also available to assist in the choice of the most appropriate programme of study and to provide information about Level 4 qualifications and higher. Advice about fees and student loans should be directed to the Student Services Financial & Eligibility Lead.
 - 7.10.5. The admissions process is monitored through feedback and, where necessary, appropriate action is taken to address areas for development identified.
 - 7.10.6. The HE curriculum team and awarding bodies are responsible for setting the entry criteria for programmes. Decisions on applications are made by tutors on behalf of their course managers. This process will take into account:
 - 7.10.6.1. The applicant's potential to succeed on their chosen programme of study;
 - 7.10.6.2. The applicant's actual or expected academic or professional qualifications and grades;
 - 7.10.6.3. Relevant work or other experience;
 - 7.10.6.4. The applicant's own statements of interest in the programme/subject;
 - 7.10.6.5. References;
 - 7.10.6.6. Where appropriate, an interview, portfolio or audition;
 - 7.10.6.7. Qualifications in the use of English language.
 - 7.10.7. For some programmes, there will be more applicants than places and competition for offers is unavoidable. In cases where East Sussex College is unable to make an offer for the applicant's original choice of programme, an alternative will be provided, though this may not necessarily be for a higher education programme.

- 7.10.8. East Sussex College reserves the right to cancel courses before commencement should it not be in a position to run the course. In this instance, applicants will be notified in writing at the earliest opportunity and all efforts will be taken to minimise any detrimental impact to the applicant.
- 7.10.9. East Sussex College, in conjunction with the Admissions team, have the right to amend entry requirements during confirmation and clearing. Each application will be considered on an individual basis.
- 7.10.10. All applications for full time programmes should be made through UCAS. No preference will be given to applications which are received in advance of the main UCAS deadline date. Applications which are received after this date will be considered if places are still available. Applications for part time programmes should be made directly to East Sussex College through the website.
- 7.10.11. All applicants will be offered an interview. This will usually be scheduled to coincide with Open Days or taster sessions but can be arranged at other times at the discretion of the relevant tutor(s). Where an interview in person is not practical, a video or telephone interview should be offered.
- 7.10.12. Applications from students who have non-standard qualifications or wish work experience to be taken into account as part of their application will be considered on an individual basis.
- 7.10.13. Applicants may be made one of three types of offer:
- 7.10.13.1. **Unconditional offer**
Where an applicant has already met the entry criteria (for example, if the applicant obtained the grades then had a gap year) for a programme and there are sufficient places remaining on the programme, an unconditional offer may be made. This is subject to the timely completion of the enrolment process.
- 7.10.13.2. **Conditional offer**
Where an applicant is able to demonstrate that they are likely to meet the entry criteria for a programme by the enrolment period and there are sufficient places remaining on a programme, a conditional offer may be made. A conditional offer is subject to the achievement of the entry criteria and to the timely completion of the enrolment process. Applicants will be informed of the conditions that they will have to meet before they will be enrolled onto the programme.
- 7.10.13.3. **Withdrawn offer**
The college reserves the right to withdraw an offer if an applicant has not responded in a timely manner to communication requesting confirmation that they wish to take up the offer of a place. The reason for the withdrawal will be added to a student's application within the UCAS portal.
- 7.10.14. Applicant Acceptance of Offer: Applicants are expected to respond to an offer using the appropriate method via UCAS, or by emailing helloHE@escg.ac.uk.
- 7.10.15. In exceptional circumstances, the Assistant Principal Hastings or their nominated deputy can authorise entry onto a programme of study if an applicant has not fulfilled all the entry criteria for the programme. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate that they have a commitment to succeed and they will be required to participate fully in any learning support which is considered necessary to achieve the qualification.
- 7.10.16. Where an application has been rejected, the applicant may appeal in writing to the Assistant Principal Hastings if they believe that the policy has not been applied correctly in the processing of their application. Appeals will only be upheld where the Admissions Policy was not applied, and the incorrect application of the policy led to the rejection of the applicant.

- 7.10.17. The admission of students with a declared criminal conviction is subject to assessment by the Safeguarding Manager with regard to the duty of care to the wider college community. All information disclosed is confidential and will be held in accordance with the requirements of data protection legislation.
- 7.10.18. Most applicants wishing to defer the start of their course for a year will be required to meet any conditions in time for the original start date. Where a deferral is agreed, it will be for one year only. Any applicant wishing to defer for a second year will be required to submit a new application.
- 7.10.19. At enrolment, all students will be provided with a copy of their Learning Agreement, which they should sign. This agreement outlines the responsibilities of both the college and the student.
- 7.10.20. Should any applicant be unsuccessful in their application, they have the right to appeal to the Assistant Principal Hastings within two weeks of their application being rejected.
- 7.10.21. Students wishing to use prior attainment or experience as evidence of prior learning are asked to refer to the HE Recognition of Prior Learning Policy for further details. Using evidence of prior learning or experience to enter higher education must be made known at the time of application to the course tutor and the Assistant Principal Hastings to ensure that the appropriate report is filed.
- 7.10.22. East Sussex College holds a Student Route Visa Licence (Tier 4) to sponsor international students.