Admissions Policy

Designation number	LC003	Title	Admissions Policy
Current Version number	Sep 2024 v6	Review date	Sep 2025
Published on website	Yes	Related policies and/or procedures	Student Handbook Academic Appeals Student Disciplinary Policy Complaints Policy Grievance Procedures AAT Academic Appeals

Relation to QAA requirements (parts of code covered)
Informed by UK Quality Code – Core Practices for Quality

1. Admissions Policy Statement: Objectives and Principles

1.1. The College is a leading private provider of high quality accessible and flexible further and higher education for regional, national and international communities.

1.2. The College recruits students from a diversity of backgrounds, admitting to its courses those applicants who, by virtue of their interests, abilities, knowledge, experience and motivation, will be best assisted to realise their full academic, creative or professional potential by benefiting from the College's educational provision.

1.3. The College wants students to gain the highest level of award of which they are capable. Therefore the admission of each student is based on a reasonable expectation that the applicant will be able to achieve the aims and outcomes of the course and the standard required for the award for which they wish to register.

1.4. This expectation can be demonstrated through a wide variety of forms of preparation, including relevant experiential learning derived from employment or voluntary work, through vocational, professional and overseas awards, as well as through conventional certificated qualifications. Where appropriate for some identified groups offers will be contextualised to ensure all those who have the potential to benefit from higher education have the opportunity to participate.

2. Equal Opportunity

2.1 The admissions process is consistent with the College's Equality and Diversity Policy and its commitment to encouraging the enrolment of students from many different backgrounds, especially from those groups currently under-represented in further and higher education. The admissions process is fair and equitable and applies equally to all individuals.

2.2 There are specific procedures for applicants declaring a disability and for applicants declaring a criminal conviction, as follows:

Applicants declaring a disability:
- An applicant declaring a disability on their application will be contacted and asked to complete a questionnaire with regard to their expected support needs whilst at College.
- The academic decision on an application is made independent of any disability support needs.
- The emphasis in the disability procedure is to support the applicant as required, and the College Disability Policy is followed in all cases.
- Additional support needs will be discussed with an applicant and recorded to form the basis of a support plan for the student whilst at the College.

Applicants declaring a disability and interviews/selection/open days:
- Interviews/selection/open days are designed to not put anyone at a disadvantage should they declare a disability.
- More time can be given in written and verbal tests if required, and a separate room can be provided if necessary for these tests.
- Provision for interpreters/mobility helpers can be made, although applicants are welcome to bring their own interpreters/helpers if they would feel more comfortable doing so.
- Applicants must make the Admissions team aware (at admissions@lcuck.ac.uk) of their needs prior to an interview so that arrangements can be made.

Applicants declaring a criminal conviction:

- An applicant declaring an unspent criminal conviction on their application (or a spent criminal conviction for a course where the applicant will be working in teaching, health, and social work or vulnerable adults) will be contacted for further information.
- Where an applicant will be teaching, or working in health, social work or with vulnerable adults the applicant's conviction will be considered during the application and interview process and they will be asked to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS – formally CRB) enhanced check if they are successful in obtaining a place on the course. Some courses are restricted as to access because of their professional links and an application will not be considered where certain offences have been committed. The applicant will be kept up to date at all stages of the application process with regard to their status.
- For all other courses, an applicant is asked for more information and a risk assessment is carried out to determine whether the applicant can be offered a place at the College.
- The emphasis in the criminal conviction procedure is not to discriminate against or further punish an applicant, but to make a responsible assessment of risk to

the College's course, accommodation, other students, staff and other members of the community which may impact on the College.

2.3 The following sections highlight points relating to specific areas of equality of opportunity that are often of public interest.

Age:
For higher education courses, there are no upper or lower age limits. All applicants must satisfy the entry qualifications but also be suitably prepared to achieve the aims and objectives of the course.

Contextual Data:
The College does not apply a broad contextual data approach with respect to parental education, information relating to the applicants school, or postcode relating to participation rates. This information will not be considered in the making of academic offers but may be used in reports on the College's achievement of its Widening Participation aims.

The College does actively seek to contextualise academic offers targeted at those who fall into one of the following groups and would otherwise not be made an academic offer:
- Care Leavers and those without parental support
- Those who have a non-standard education profile at school age (e.g. young parents, those excluded, youth convictions etc...) and are borderline entry standard.
- Those with prior educational attainment gaps
- The College welcomes information and declaration in these areas from applicants and where relevant an appropriate professional to support an applicant.

Where the contextualised information process is triggered there are a number of key steps or adjustments that will apply:
- an additional detailed verbal reference sought from an appropriate source to add context.
- a guaranteed interview in order to be able to fully assess potential, benefit from more full academic guidance and feedback should the application still be unsuccessful
- provision of information and support to the applicant to maximise the opportunity, including the possibility of having a supporter accompany the applicant to interview
- contribution to travel costs for interview
- where an application remains a rejection, justification for that rejection with feedback and guidance will be provided to the applicant and any professional supporter

3. Application

3.1 All other applicants can apply direct to the College through its Online Application System at www.lcuck.ac.uk/applyonline.

3.2 A hard copy application form can be downloaded from the College website.

3.3 Applicants who are already studying at the College should contact Admissions as there are special arrangements for their application for internal progression.

3.4 Some International and European applicants will use recognised agents who have a contract with the College to help them to apply. However, the College will communicate only with the applicant using the contact details provided on the application.

3.5 The deadlines for application are generally six weeks before the start date of any programmes. These deadlines are suggested to ensure that an application can be processed in detail and properly, in time for applicants to prepare themselves for induction, enrolment and study. Late applications and subsequent delays in the application consideration process can be to the detriment of the student' and their engagement in their programme of study.

3.6 Qualifications submitted by post in support of an application should be copies. No responsibility will be taken for the return of original certificates. The original certificates should however be brought to enrolment for inspection. Where an applicant's work is submitted in the support of an application (such as artwork, performance work etc.), then this must not be original work or the only copy of the work in existence. No responsibility will be taken for the return of such work and an applicant should make sure that the work they submit is not irreplaceable.

4. Recruitment and Selection

4.1 In assessing the suitability of applicants for admission and the suitability of the College for the applicant, admissions staff ensure that applicants are in a position to benefit from the College's provision, that the provision will make appropriate demands of the applicant, and that the applicant's motivation for the course of study and for the institution is high.

4.2 Admissions staff receive regular training to enable them to recruit and select students from a variety of backgrounds and to make fair and sound judgments.

4.3 Applicants can demonstrate evidence of achievement in a wide variety of ways. Progression, franchise and other consortium arrangements are taken into account where they exist, and students are given the opportunity to achieve advanced standing through credit transfer and Accreditation of Prior Learning.

4.4 Recruitment and selection decisions are made using the application, references, interviews where appropriate, records of achievement and examination results (which are interpreted in the context of the applicant's personal and educational situation).

4.5 For entry onto some specialist or other courses, particular professional or subject based qualifications or experience, or a satisfactory portfolio of visual work may be required. These special requirements are stated under the details for the relevant courses. Any portfolios of work supplied will NOT be returned, so should be either provided electronically, or supplied as originals for an interview, and taken away by the applicant after the interview. No responsibility will be taken by the College for original work sent to, or left at, the College.

4.6 Where an interview or additional information is required to make a decision on an application, this will be made clear in the entry requirements of the course in question, on the College's website. However, Admissions staff reserve the right to interview any applicant with non-traditional qualifications or who has been out of education for a time. This is to ensure that the applicant is ready for Higher Education and to identify additional support that may be required. Where an application has triggered the use of additional contextual information there will be the guarantee of an interview.

4.7 Students who do not satisfy requirements for Literacy and Numeracy will be required to undertake a Diagnostic assessment at the appropriate level in addition to interviews conducted.

4.8 Some courses require supplementary information, such as information on experience in social work, in teaching etc. These details are again stipulated in the entry criteria of the courses this applies to.

4.9 The process of recruitment and selection is made clear in the entry requirements section of each course's entry on the College website and on the UCAS website (where applicable) and the broad criteria which are used to judge an applicant's suitability are explicit.

5 Entry Requirements

5.1 All courses are required to:
- State their entry criteria in terms of the prior knowledge, skills, competences and qualities required as well as in terms of qualifications;
- Demonstrate how credit transfer and the accreditation of prior learning for advanced standing will operate; Make explicit details of the selection process and procedures and the criteria and means by which applicants will be judged;
- Clarify which applicants will be interviewed, how interviews will be conducted, and the criteria to be used for making judgements;
- Specify in broad terms how applicants may demonstrate achievement and motivation in different ways.

5.2 This information is provided for the processes of validation and review and is used to populate the entry requirements section of each course's entry on the College website and on the UCAS website (where applicable).

5.3 The College offers prospective students three methods of entry onto its courses:
- Certificated Entry for those applicants with formal qualifications.
- Partially Certificated or un-certificated Entry for those applicants with few or no formal qualifications, but who possess other relevant experience.

- Advanced Standing for those applicants who wish to claim credit for relevant prior learning experience.
- The medium of instruction at the College is English, therefore all international applicants most provide evidence of adequate use of English.
- The specific level of English required is stipulated in the entry requirements section of each course's entry on the College website.

5.4   The above entry requirements apply to both part-time and full-time applicants

6 Feedback

6.1   The College provides feedback to applicant, and considers this to be good practice. Feedback will be included in a reject decision made by the College, and given to the applicant.

6.2   Where an applicant has been made an alternative offer to that they originally applied for, because their qualifications and experience is more appropriate to the alternative offer, then the applicant will be contacted by email and the reasons for the alternative offer explained.

7 Offers

7.1   The College manages a paperless process for the majority of its applications and is therefore able to minimise the delay in considering applications.

7.2   Communication with the applicant is of paramount importance and the applicant will be communicated with by email, letter and phone. All applicants must check the email address they supplied on application on a regular basis, and ensure that junk filters allow for emails from the College to be received.

7.3   Applications for courses with interview will take longer to process than other applications.
- Applications for those whose offer is appropriate to contextualise will take longer to process given the guarantee of an interview and other appropriate measures to assess context. This longer timescale is felt to be in the interests of the applicant and will only apply where the application would otherwise have been rejected.
- If an applicant feels that their application is taking a long time to process, then the applicant should contact Admissions in the first instance at admissions@lcuck.ac.uk.

8 Conclusion

8.1   By clearly matching applicants to suitable programmes, the College will work towards a situation in which it is the institution of first choice for those applicants whose needs it is best able to serve, will enhance retention and success rates, and will seek to minimise the extent to which students have to be recruited through Clearing.

9 Queries and Updates

10.1   Any queries about this policy and the admissions process should be directed in the first instance to: admissions@lcuck.ac.uk

10.2   This policy is updated as required and is approved by the Academic Board at the College. The Admissions Policy is checked for currency on an annual basis.

10 Complaints

11.1   The College has a complaints procedure, and information on this is available on the college website. All complaints about the admissions process should be directed in the first instance to: admissions@lcuck.ac.uk

The End