

Writtle College

Writtle College Admissions Policy Statement for Higher Education

Admissions cycle 2015/16 for entry 2016

Head of Registry & Admissions

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1 Strategic Vision [QAA Indicator 1]

Admissions Policy Statement for Higher Education

Strategic Plan 2015-18 <http://writtle.ac.uk/Strategic-Vision>

Our strategic vision:

A distinctive place to study and to serve the environment through science and the arts

Recognised for the quality of our specialist education locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Relationship with the University of Essex

The College has enjoyed a mutually supportive relationship with the University of Essex since 1996 which extends to all levels of the organisation. This includes the University's membership on the Board of Governors and close relationships with the College Executive Group other strategic and operational managers and staff. The College enjoys a high degree of independence due to its long-standing experience and maturity and its independent engagement with QAA audit processes.

All Writtle College degrees are validated by the University of Essex.

TDAP

We are ambitious in our plans to achieve taught degree awarding powers, thus securing our position as a university college. This will enable us to develop new partnerships, particularly in an international context and maximise our potential for continued sustainable independence as a Higher Education institution.

2 General Principles [QAA Indicator 1, 2]

The Admissions Policy Statement for Higher Education underlies all activity which the College undertakes in relation to student recruitment, selection and admission from initial enquiry through to registration of a student. The policy supports the relationship and engagement with the student and is aligned to our strategic framework, mission and vision.

Writtle College operates an open Admissions Policy that ensures fair, transparent and equitable treatment of all applicants and is committed to providing a flexible, high quality teaching and learning environment, focused on supporting students in achieving their full potential. The College offers a wide range of Postgraduate, Undergraduate and Foundation Degree courses validated by the University of Essex. This Policy relates to all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes offered at Writtle College.

The College is fully committed and supportive of equal access and inclusion and aims to avoid unfair discrimination on any grounds. The College is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity and aims to provide a learning and social environment that is free from unfair discrimination. The College believes that a student body which is diverse in terms of background and experience contributes to a stimulating learning environment.

All applicants are considered for admission on the basis of educational performance and/or professional experience that provides evidence of ability to meet the demands of the chosen course. The College therefore welcomes applications from students with the potential to succeed at Writtle College. Applicants are evaluated as individuals, considering both academic and vocational achievements, potential to achieve and to meet higher education outcomes.

3 Admissions Code of Practice & key overarching principles [QAA Indicator 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8]

The College is committed to accurate and appropriate pre-entry information and support to prospective students in order to ensure that they are enabled to make an informed decision about whether to apply for a course.

All applicants are considered on an equal basis, taking into account their academic record, academic potential, school reference, personal statement and background in the context of the subject area.

Writtle College Admissions Policy

The College operates a centralised Admission Office ensuring a common and transparent approach. Admissions staff make standard offers based on agreed and confirmed course entry criteria and work closely with subject specialist admissions officers to ensure that all offers are fair and concise. The central Admissions Office is responsible for all communications with UCAS, including the transmissions of admissions decisions.

Applications for full-time undergraduate courses should be made through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). The College observes the procedures and deadlines for the handling of applications as set out by UCAS. All applications for admissions to full-time undergraduate degree courses must be made through UCAS. Applications for part time study, postgraduate, further education should be made direct to the College. All applications should be made through the central Admissions Office.

All applications for undergraduate courses should normally be received by the UCAS deadline date of 15 January; however, the College will continue to consider late applications with equal consideration. For Art and Design courses, the deadline date is 24 March.

Applications from mature students who are not applying directly from, or within a year of leaving, school or college, who have non-standard qualifications or who wish work experience to be taken into account as part of their application, will be considered on an individual basis.

Applications from international students will be considered and processed consistently in line with Home/EU applications. However, unconditional letters will include the necessary text to comply with the UK Visas & Immigration (Home Office) Points Based System (Tier 4) entry procedure. International applicants will be expected to have achieved the equivalent of the minimum entry requirement. The Admissions Officer will make an assessment and evaluation using both UK NARIC (National Academic Recognition Information Centre) and the UCAS Guide to International Qualifications. International applicants must be proficient in English.

The College encourages all applicants to visit the campus and see the extensive facilities. This may, for some courses, involve an interview. [see section 11] All applicants have the opportunity to visit the College or attend an Open Day. For the majority of courses, the College does not require the applicant to attend a formal interview. However, in some cases applicants will be interviewed if it is felt that this would identify the potential to study and succeed. For Art and Design courses, applicants are encouraged to attend an interview which provides an opportunity to present a portfolio of art/design work.

The personal statement and reference provide important supplementary information regarding ability, motivation and potential, as well as information about personal circumstances which will be taken into account in reaching an admissions decision.

Allowance will be made for any applicant with verified exceptional circumstances or who face difficult issues or challenges, for example, disrupted studies, examinations, illness, death of a family member.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide full and accurate information as part of the admissions process and to notify the College of any changes or corrections to their original application.

The admission procedure for undergraduate students is undertaken in accordance with published codes of practice, including the SPA Good Practice for Admissions Policies, the QAA Chapter B2: Recruitment, selection and admission to Higher Education – 10 indicators of sound practice (published October 2013) and the Universities & Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) regulations and complies with current legislation affecting the admissions of students.

Changes to the content of courses including withdrawal, approval or other significant changes to the content will be communicated to the applicant without delay. Occasionally it may be necessary to change components of the course and or facilities. In these rare cases the College will notify the applicant. The College will undertake to make every reasonable effort to provide the teaching and academic facilities necessary for the course of study.

The Head of Registry & Admissions offers specific UCAS and admissions procedure training to admissions tutors, supported by SPA (Supporting Professionalism in Admissions). The engagement of Admissions tutors in updating entry criteria, the annual HE Academic Update and HE Recruitment Clinics (run by the Marketing Manager and the Head of Registry & Admissions) ensures they are conversant with entry standards and College academic procedures. The Registry team regularly participate in training sessions. Particular attention has been paid to procedures introduced for overseas recruitment by the UK Visas & Immigration.

A detailed Admissions Code of Practice is available from Admissions Office.

Applicants are not discriminated against on grounds of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, religion, disability or age.

Responsibility for oversight of and changes to our Writtle College Admissions Policy – Statement for Higher Education rests with Academic Board.

4 Applicants with additional support needs/disabilities [QAA Indicator 2, 6]

Applicants with disabilities or additional needs are considered on the same academic grounds as all other applicants.

Applicants are encouraged to disclose their additional support needs or disability at the point of application or earlier to ensure appropriate levels of support and/or reasonable adjustments are available from the outset of the course. A team of specialist support staff are available to discuss any aspect of individual needs, prior to and during the admission cycle and on programme.

During the registration process the Learner Service department actively encourage students to disclose if they are 'in care' or a 'care leaver'. Additional support is available for these young people. This may vary according to the individual, but could include additional financial and welfare support/assistance.

The team also encourage disclosure of whether students are young adult carers (16-24 year olds whose life is in some way restricted because of the need to take responsibility for the care of a person on a regular basis). As well as any additional support the team have good links to specialist external agencies which offer support and provide further assistance.

The Learners Services department offers a range of services including additional learning support, financial hardship assistance and welfare and counselling. These services are promoted to students as widely as possible including at open days, during application and registration, at induction, through the Student Handbook, marketing materials, noticeboards, student communication mechanisms and academic staff.

<http://www.writtle.ac.uk/Learner-Services>

5 Admissions criteria and selection [QAA Indicator 7, 8]

The College is committed to providing accurate and appropriate pre-entry information to support prospective students in order to ensure that they are enabled to make an informed decision about whether to apply. The College's website and printed publications provides clear information and guidance on all entry requirements, grades and subjects including G/VCE A-Level tariff scores, Access to HE Diploma, BTEC qualifications (QCF), NPTC, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Diploma and Cambridge Pre-U, functional skills, GCSEs and desirable practical experience.

Whilst we will normally consider a wide range of subjects as appropriate entry onto our courses, applicants are advised to check individual course requirements, where in some cases there are specific subjects or combination of subjects which we believe will provide the best preparation for study on a particular course. A level General Studies is taken into account, however, the student will need to have also achieved a grade C in one other A2 level subject, together with a minimum of four GCSE passes at Grade C or above, to include English, Mathematics and Science. Detailed UCAS Entry requirements are available within the UCAS Course Search. These provide details about courses, the College and course specific entry qualifications.

Unit grade information will be made available for all certificated AS and A level qualifications. We will not state specific unit grades as part of our conditional offers but we may look closely at unit grades in cases where applicants do not meet the conditions of their offers at Confirmation. Unit grade information will also be taken into consideration during Clearing.

The College welcomes applications from those with vocational qualifications, who are returning to education, who do not have the specified formal qualifications and those who are not applying directly from or within a year of leaving school or college, who have non-standard qualifications or who request work or life experience to be taken into account as part of their application.

In addition to academic qualifications the College will consider whether the applicant is suitably motivated to successfully complete their chosen course. When selecting applicants the College will take into account information provided within the personal statement and reference.

International qualifications are also welcomed together with an appropriate level of English Language. International qualifications are evaluated by referring to independently published guides such as UK NARIC and the UCAS Guide to International Qualifications.

If an undergraduate applicant withdraws from a programme in one year, and wishes to re-apply, the applicant is required to use the UCAS admissions process to re-apply.

The College reserves the right not to consider an applicant for re-entry if the applicant has previously been withdrawn on academic grounds, unless extenuating circumstances have been declared and approved.

6 Applicant experience, expectation and engagement [QAA Indicator 10]

The process of engaging with applications early in the admissions cycle builds a strong sense of 'belonging' from the outset. As part of our continuous engagement with applicants and to support the transition into Higher Education, academic admissions tutors together with key admissions and professional support staff, provide essential pre-entry information, advice and guidance. Each subject area has its own admissions tutor, responsible for course-specific decisions, offer and supporting prospective students through their initial enquiry, application and follow-up to start their course.

During confirmation applicants receive further detailed information to support academic preparation, including induction and registration details. A comprehensive Induction Guide is posted early September to all confirmed applicants and returning students.

Academic course induction takes place during the first week of arrival. The content of the academic induction may vary by subject area but will include course and module information, teaching, learning and assessment, an introduction and discussion of the Student Charter, the published Course Handbook, and regulations. Students will be shown how to access their online course timetable and Moodle - the College's virtual learning environment.

<http://www.writtle.ac.uk/pdfs/FINAL%20Student%20Charter.pdf>

7 Admissions Tests [QAA Indicator 6]

It is not Writtle College's standard policy to use admissions tests as part of its selection process.

8 Offers [QAA Indicator 6, 8]

On receiving an application the applicant will be issued with an acknowledgement within 2 working days, however, during busy periods particularly during Christmas closure, the turnaround times may be extended. Where possible decisions will normally be made within 5-7 working days and offers dispatched electronically via UCAS, email and post. Any offer and/or subsequent registrations are made on the basis of the information supplied by the applicant is true and complete.

In some cases where an applicant has applied for one course and is unsuccessful, an alternative course may be offered, in which case this will be officially communicated to the applicant by the Admissions Office. The applicant is then asked to confirm that they accept an alternative course by emailing confirmation to the Admissions Office.

If, an offer cannot be made, the applicant's file is referred to the appointed subject specific Admissions Officer and/or Head of School. This ensures that the file has been thoroughly examined and no details/evidence missed.

An offer, whether conditional or unconditional, will be made in good faith taking into account information supplied by the applicant and/or referee at the time of the application.

In light of additional information which was not available at the time of selection, an offer may be amended or, in exceptional circumstances, withdrawn. The College reserves the right to correct errors where they have been made in the communication of decisions and offers. However, an offer made in error where all conditions have been satisfied will only be withdrawn with the applicant's consent.

9 Contextual Data [QAA Indicator 6]

From 2012 the College will be collecting contextual data from UCAS. Publicly available datasets from the government and other agencies will be collated and stored, such as school/college A level performance. No decisions will be made purely on the basis of this information and all undergraduate applicants must meet

our standard academic criteria to be considered for entry. Contextual data may be used a part of the overall decision making process and will not be used in isolation.

10 Portfolio Guidelines [QAA Indicator 6]

For courses invested in the School of Design, applications are expected to demonstrate an interest in design and creative studies. It is recommended that applicants submit a portfolio of design work during the application process. The portfolio may include work produced from a recognised Art and Design course or personal work. Detailed Portfolio Guidelines are available direct from the School of Design.

11 Interviews [QAA Indicator 7, 8]

For the majority of programmes, the College does not require applicants to attend an interview as part of the selection process. However, some programme areas require applicants to attend an interview as one element of the decision-making process and prior to making an offer.

Interviews provide a valuable opportunity for applicants to demonstrate their communication skills, analytical and/or practical skills, motivation and interest in a specific programme of study. Programmes which require an interview are clearly identified both on the College website and UCAS Course Search – Entry Profiles.

All applicants for interview for a specific programme are assessed individually, without partiality or bias, in line with published entry criteria and in accordance with the admission policy in relation to equality and diversity.

Interviews dates, times, duration will be published in advance of the admissions cycle. Applicants will be provided with adequate notice period prior to interview, normally a minimum of two weeks, together with an alternative interview date. Interviews for full-time undergraduate students will be processed electronically via UCAS.

The College will make available, where reasonably possible, telephone or SKYPE interviews and follow the same principles of a face-to-face interview. Interviews are normally conducted by trained interviews.

If an applicant is under the age of 18 years of age at the time of the interview, arrangement will be made under our Safeguarding Policy.

Applicants will be sent clear pre-interview information in relation to the interview process, the structure of the day, interview criteria, preparation and assessment in advance of the interview. Applicants may be asked specific questions in relation to their personal statement and practical experience. Applicants will be informed in advance of interview if they are expected to undertake any appropriate research.

Applicants are encourage to inform the College of any specific requirements or support needs prior to interview so that reasonable adjustments can be made to support the interview.

Admissions staff that carry out interviews undergo specific training appropriate to interviewing, safeguarding and equality and diversity.

All associated travel and accommodation costs incurred by the applicant will not be refunded if the applicant is unsuccessful or successful in gaining an offer of a place on their chosen programme of study.

Following the interview the outcome will be communicated normally with 7 working days from the date of interview, however, during busy periods particularly during Christmas closure, the turnaround times may be extended. Any written notes made during the interview by the interviewer can be requested following the interview. Requests for interview feedback should be made in writing by the applicant to the Admissions Office.

12 Confirmation of results [QAA Indicator 6, 8]

'Confirmation' refers to the period in August when Universities/Colleges receive examination results. Applicants who achieve the required entry grades have their conditional offer confirmed and accepted. Applicants who have not met the conditions of offer are reviewed by the subject Admissions Officer who will contact the applicant direct to discuss possible alternate course/s, although there is no guarantee that an offer will be confirmed.

The confirmation procedure includes the exchange and processing of data between UCAS and Universities/Colleges. UCAS Track Progress is available to all students to keep up-to-date with the progress of their application and reply to offers.

13 Feedback to unsuccessful applicants [QAA Indicator 7, 8, 9]

In order to support our transparent admissions process, the College undertakes to provide appropriate feedback to unsuccessful applicants and where possible considers alternate courses of study. Admissions Officers are prepared to provide written feedback upon request from the applicant. This communication, should provide details as to why the applicant was unsuccessful in gaining an offer and where possible options for alternative courses of study at the College. Feedback will only be made direct to the applicant unless the College receives a written request from the applicant to share information with other individuals. Full details are available in the Admissions Code of Practice.

UCAS have developed an online electronic feedback system. This has enabled the College to provide a brief description of why an application has been deemed unsuccessful through the UCAS system. Applicants can view the decision and any reasons via UCAS Track.

14 Disclosing a Criminal Conviction [QAA Indicator 6]

The admission of students with a declared criminal conviction is subject to assessment by the Applications Committee in relation to the duty of care to the wider College community. All information disclosed to the Applications Committee is confidential and will be held as such by the committee in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1988.

Applicants who declare a criminal conviction will receive a letter accompanied by a criminal conviction disclosure form (SCCIF). The disclosure form requests further information about the nature of the conviction. This information will be then be reviewed by the Applications Committee.

The Applications Committee Terms of Reference, including the detailed Students with Criminal Convictions policy and procedure is available from the College Secretary.

15 Admissions with academic credit / direct entry [QAA Indicator 7]

Applicants are welcomed with non-standard entry qualifications and those with prior experience and achievements. Some applicants may be able to transfer credit for previous learning or claim credit for some elements of the course. Details are available upon request.

16 APL and APEL [QAA Indicator 7]

Applicants may be considered through the accreditation of prior learning (*APL*), which may be certificated or experiential. The Admissions Officer for the relevant course is responsible advising the student on whether their previous learning might be used to replace part of their proposed course of study. Their application for APL is considered by the Credit Approvals Board. Staff and Student Guides on the APL process are available.

The College welcomes top-up applications from students who have gained previous qualifications. Applicants are advised to contact the subject admissions tutor to discuss individual requirements. Bridging studies may be required as part of the entry criteria, where applicable.

17 Deferred Entry [QAA Indicator 7]

Applicants may wish to defer their entry. The College generally welcomes applicants who intend to defer their entry for a year (a gap year). If this is the case the applicant should contact the College Admissions Office or UCAS.

Applicants who apply via UCAS must follow UCAS deferral procedures. The College will not normally allow an applicant to defer their entry for more than one year. If the applicant requests a deferral for more than one year, the applicant must re-apply.

18 Fees and Finances [QAA Indicator 5]

Students are expected to have sufficient funds to pay course fees and living expenses during their period of study, and are asked to provide details of funding arrangements on the application form and during the enrolment process. Information regarding current [fees, scholarships and bursaries](#) can be located on the College website and are also published in the Higher Education Fees – Financial Information and Regulations for Students. Fees for overseas students are fixed annually and therefore a small increase will be applied during the duration of the student's course.

The College reserves the right to change the level of Home/EU tuition fees subject to the provision of our current Access Agreement for undergraduates as approved by The Office of Fair Access.

The Admissions Team determines the tuition fee status of a student in accordance with UK Government legislation Education (Fees and Awards) Regulations which states that students who are classified as 'overseas' may be charged a higher level of fee than those classified as 'home' or 'EU' students. Assessments of fee status are carried out on an individual basis and take into account the circumstances of each applicant. Assessments cannot be carried out until an application for admission has been made.

A completed Fee Status Questionnaire together with supporting evidence is used to assess and determine an applicant's fee status.

There is a compulsory tuition fee deposit requirement for overseas applicants. [Deposit Policy](#).

19 English Language Requirements [QAA Indicator 5, 6, 7]

Entry criteria for students whose first language is not English are reviewed annually. Reviews include consideration of UKVI rules and are carried out in consultation with the Schools, the Pre-Sessional English Language (PSEL) course leader and staff responsible for International Recruitment. Review outcomes are reported to ASQEC and revised guidance is published on the College website. The College engages fully with prospective students and makes offer decisions swiftly.

Applicants whose first language is not English must prove that they are proficient in English language necessary to succeed in their chosen course. For applicants who do not currently reach the required criteria, registration onto one of our Pre-Sessional English Language courses may be sufficient.

The Pre-Sessional English runs over the spring and summer and lasts between 24 weeks and 6 weeks and is delivered in 6-week blocks, the entry point is based on the student's level of English. The course is designed to support international students whose first language is not English. The course includes study visits which enrich students' socio-cultural knowledge and understanding of the UK.

On completion of the PSEL course, and subject to passing all the required assessment or achieving the required International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score, students would normally progress on to a Writtle College Further Education (Level 3) or Higher Education course.

The descriptor for Level 4 in the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) has informed the design of this course. The English language requirements of Writtle College are benchmarked against the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for languages) and the IELTS test (International English Language Testing Service). Where applicants require a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa, the College's benchmarks also meet the minimum English language requirements of the UK Visas & Immigration. IELTS (or equivalent SELT) requirements for entry onto Pre-sessional English prior to entry onto a Writtle College course (Table1) All IELTS elements must be above 4.0 for entry onto Pre-sessional English (CEFR B1)

Table 1 INTENDED COURSE OF STUDY	IELTS if taking PSEL 1 (24 weeks)	IELTS if taking PSEL 2 (18 weeks)	IELTS if taking PSEL 3 (12 weeks)	IELTS if taking PSEL 4 (6 weeks)
Further Education (Level 3)	4.0	4.0	4.5	5.0
Foundation Degree or Higher Education Diploma / Certificate	4.0	4.0	4.5	5.0
Bachelors Degree	4.0	4.5	5.0	5.5
Masters Degree or PhD	4.5	5.0	5.5	6.0

Non-EEA nationals whose first language is not English must prove that they are sufficiently able to understand and express themselves in both spoken and written English. Writtle College requires that these applicants have a minimum level of English language as shown below (Table 2).

EEA applicants whose first language is not English are subject to the same rules as for non-EEA applicants and will need to achieve the required International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score or equivalent (Table 2). It may be possible for EEA applicants to provide other evidence that they have sufficient English to follow the course they wish to take at Writtle. This must clearly show evidence of successful study of the English language of at least four years from a recognised language organisation, with the date of their highest level English language exam being within two years of the date of application.

Table 2	IELTS [validity 2 years]
FE [CEFR B1] Evidence of SELT will be required for CAS	Overall score 5.5 Minimum 5.0 in all elements
FDA / Higher Certificates / Higher Diplomas [CEFR B1] Evidence of SELT will be required for CAS	Overall score 5.5 Minimum 5.0 in all elements
UG degree [CEFR B2] Evidence of SELT is not required for CAS	Overall score 6.0 Minimum 5.5 in all elements
PG [CEFR B2] Evidence of SELT is not required for CAS	Overall score 6.5 Minimum 5.5 in all elements

20 Fraudulent statements, Omissions and Similarity Detection

UCAS provides a Similarity Detection Service, which identifies potential plagiarism in applicants' personal statements. Full details are published on the [UCAS website](#) for HE Staff.

The following is the policy and procedure that Writtle College will adopt:

- where UCAS reports an applicant under the Similarity Detection Service and the percentage of similarity is equal to or above 40% the Head of Admissions will contact the applicant and invite him/her to submit a revised personal statement within 14 days. The applicants file will be held in central Admissions

- on receipt of a revised personal statement the application will be sent to the relevant subject Admissions Tutor and a decision made following the standard admissions procedure
- where no revised statement is received within 14 days a reminder will be sent to the applicant by the Head of Admissions, giving a further 7 days notice and a notification of a possible course rejection if no response is received
- where no revised statement is received after the two notifications the applicant's file will be passed to the relevant subject Admissions Tutor with the percentage score in order to make a decision

21 Transparency [QAA Indicator 4, 8, 9]

The College seeks to provide applicants with clear and accurate information. This includes information about the Admissions Policy and processes, published course information, entry requirements, admissions procedures, financial costs, financial support and the social and support facilities which the College offers.

Detailed UCAS Entry Profiles are available for all courses. These can be located on the UCAS website from the Course Search facility.

22 Monitoring and Evaluation [QAA Indicator 4]

The Admissions Policy is monitored and reviewed annually by the Academic Standards Committee.

The Academic Standards Committee meets to consider and monitor entry requirements, recommend changes to the tariff and monitor and approve entry criteria.

Admission profiles in respect of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, disability, age and qualifications on entry are considered and monitored by the Equality and Diversity Group. A student representative is included in the membership of this group.

Central Admissions periodically audits offers made, timescales and application turnaround times.

The College makes every effort to ensure that the information we provide is accurate when it is published. The College provides printed materials such as the prospectus and subject-specific literature more than 12 months before a course begins. Applicants should therefore refer to our website for the most up-to-date information about course content, selection criteria, processes and financial matters.

The College is committed to providing a fair and accessible admissions service. All staff involved in recruitment and selection are offered and encourage to attend training which is appropriate to their role.

23 Discontinued or suspended Courses [QAA Indicator 9]

Writtle College will use all reasonable endeavours to deliver courses of study in accordance with descriptions published and set out in relevant prospectus, publish materials and the Writtle College website. However, the prospectus is produced prior to the admissions cycle and it is inevitable that changes may occur between the date of printing and entry on to a course. The College will undertake practical and reasonable steps to minimise the impact of potential changes and will ensure that all applicants are kept full informed.

New courses are continually being introduced to the portfolio and optional modules revised. Applicants are advised to contact the College for up-to-date course information.

The College reserves the right to withdraw courses or parts of courses where there is insufficient demand, to charge a registration fee to cover aspects such as study visits and learning materials and to vary modes of delivery. Our offer to the applicant and the acceptance of a place at Writtle College will be subject to this condition.

The General College Regulations and the Academic Regulations are contained in the appropriate Student Handbooks, which are available on request.

Where it is necessary to discontinue or suspend a course or where there are significant changes to a course, between the time an offer is made and enrolment, the central Admissions Office will inform the applicants and advise them of the options available.

The College operates specific procedures in relation to course closure.

24 Disclaimer

The College reserves the right to make variations to courses, entry requirements and methods of delivery, and to discontinue or combine courses, both before and after the student's admissions to the College, if such action is reasonably considered necessary by the College. If in these circumstances the student wished to withdraw and enrol on a course at a different institution, we shall endeavour to assist the student.

25 Data Protection [QAA Indicator 2]

By signing the UCAS/Writtle College application form, applicants give their permission to the institution (Writtle College) to process their personal data for the purposes of selection and admission. The information on the application will form a key part of the individual student record. Should the applicant register as a student, this information will be used to make statutory returns to various bodies such as the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). A full and detailed declaration is available upon request and part of the online registration process for each year that the student is registered with the College. All data is held and processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Anonymised applicant data is analysed by the College for statutory monitoring, planning, teaching and learning, equality and diversity and in order to ensure that the processes are fair and effective.

26 Appeals and Complaints Procedure [QAA Indicator 3]

It is recognised that very occasionally applicants may have reason to question or express an opinion to the College about its decision or the way in which their application has been handled. Applicants in this situation should direct their query initially to the Admissions Officer for the course they have applied within 28 days of the occurrence (e.g decision, interview, open day); during Clearing the timeframe to investigate disputes will be 14 days. If they remain dissatisfied, the query should be directed to the Head of Registry & Admissions who will conduct a review of the complaint and/or appeal in order to safeguard the applicants' interest.

*A **complaint** is a specific concern related to a procedural error, irregularity or maladministration in the admissions procedures or policies.*

*An **appeal** is a request for a formal review of an admissions decision or the wording/terms/conditions of an offer.*

If, at any time during the admissions cycle, an applicant has cause to complain or appeal about an operational, admissions decision or administration matter, they should contact the Head of Admissions. If there is cause to continue with the complaint or appeal the applicant should put forward their complaint or appeal through the College's formal Complaints Procedure, available upon request from the College Secretary. http://www.writtle.ac.uk/PDFS/complaints_procedure.pdf

27 Confidentiality [QAA Indicator 2]

The Admissions Office is not in the position to share applicant's personal details with a third party, unless we receive confirmation from the applicant in writing. All application data is treated in strict confidence and is shared between the applicant, the Admissions Officer and admissions staff within the appropriate School and Department involved in admissions processes. All application data is stored centrally in the Admissions Office. Application data of successful applicants forms the basis of the student record. All data is held and processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

28 Student Induction [QAA Indicator 10]

An informal cross-College Induction and Enrolment Planning Working Group, with membership from Registry, Marketing, Learner Services and other central support and academic departments has worked with the SU to improve the experience of new students and their journey and transition into College life.

The induction process commences with students receiving pre-course information from central Admissions. The initial induction information provides an overview of central information such as online timetables, campus maps and useful websites/contact information. This information supports the students' experience from arrival, induction to registration. Dissemination of the curriculum information to students occurs predominantly during induction, initial lectures and at course and personal tutorials.

During confirmation applicants receive further detailed information to support academic preparation, including induction and registration details. A comprehensive **Induction Guide** is sent to all confirmed applicants in early September.

The Freshers' week includes an academic element with an introduction and discussion of the **Student Charter**, Course Handbook, timetables, course content and module information, Library, Moodle and IT services. Further induction sessions include student support, campus orientation, an international welcome, social, sporting and team-building activities. This enables students to orientate themselves within the College learning environment before teaching commences.

The College recognises the importance of the SU involvement during Freshers' week in welcoming and supporting new and returning students. The SU President and SU Academic Sabbatical Officer deliver a range of induction talks to the Schools and are making increasing efforts to improve the engagement of all groups.

All taught postgraduate students attend an induction day to aid transition, articulate expectations and build on the College's long established commitment to PDP at Level 7. The induction and generic delivery of the *Research Methods* module encourages students to meet and work with their peers from other disciplines and be part of the wider postgraduate community.

29 Student Charter [QAA Indicator 10]

The Writtle College HE Charter has been in place since 1997 and following a review during 2010-11 introduced a revised Charter in line with the Government White paper *Students at the Heart of the System* (BIS, 2011).

Writtle College is committed to continually improving the quality of its services and the Student Charter is one way of outlining that commitment to you. The Student Charter aims to outline what students can expect of the College, as well as outlining what is reasonably expected of students by the College.

The Student Charter explains how students can make the most of the opportunities available to them whilst being a student at the College. The Student Charter has been prepared in collaboration with the Students' Union. The Charter is reviewed annually. <http://www.writtle.ac.uk/pdfs/FINAL%20Student%20Charter.pdf>

30 Safeguarding Policy

Writtle College is committed to our moral and statutory duty to ensure that we function with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults receiving education and training. Writtle College staff are fully aware and compliant with the new Department for Education statutory guidance - Keeping Children Safe in Education (published in April 2014). <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education>

A Safeguarding Statement and the College's full Child Protection Policy/Safeguarding Procedures (which are updated annually) are available on the college website at <http://www.writtle.ac.uk/Policies-&-Procedures>. This includes details of the College's safeguarding team and their contact details.

31 Higher Education Achievement Report [QAA Indicator 1]

The Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) is intended to provide a single comprehensive record of a learner's achievement. The aim of the College is to issue a HEAR to students joining a three year programme from 2012 onwards.

Writtle College engages with an external HEAR support group and an internal Steering Group has been established with student representation. Internal discussions with the SU and advice from NUS and GuildHE have led to the development of potential content of HEAR section 6.6 relating to extra-curricular activity.

32 Record keeping duties [QAA Indicator 2]

The College is committed to the management and disposal of its academic and non-academic records. The Records Retention Policy and Retention schedule outlines our approach to the creation, retrieval, storage and disposal of student records.

The College will keep admissions documents for all students who register at the College for the entire period during which a student is registered with Writtle College and then for a further six year period following the end of the relationship.

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As part of the admissions process, applicants who are not successful in gaining admission the files are held for a minimum of 12 months and subsequently confidentially destroyed.

As part of the College's UKVI (Home Office) Tier 4 Sponsor Licence compliance duty, the College is required to maintain copies of all international Tier 4 student passports and visas (valid for study) together with academic qualifications, transcripts and associated documents used for the basis of admission. These documents form part of the Tier 4 audit checks and registration process. These documents are stored confidentially.

<p>Writtle College Admissions Policy Statement for Higher Education Document Control Box</p>	
Policy / Procedure Title	Admissions Policy Statement for Higher Education
Date last approved	January 2015 by Academic Board
Policy owner	Head of Registry & Admissions
Approving committee	On an annual basis by Academic Board
Status	For approval
Original Document Published	7 June 2002
Equality Impact Assessment	December 2010
Related regulations, documents, policies, procedures and relevant legislation	<p>Statutory obligations and compliance to the following Acts Equality Act 2010</p> <p>Related Policies and Terms of Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Admissions Code of Practice ▪ Equality and Diversity Policy ▪ Applications Committee – Terms and Reference ▪ Tier 4 Points-Based System Procedures & Compliance ▪ UK Visas & Immigration New Approved English Tests (August 2014) ▪ Strategic Plan ▪ Registry & Admissions Service Level Agreement (March 2014) ▪ Complaints and appeals procedure <p>The Quality Assurance Agency UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Chapter B2: Recruitment, selection and admission to higher education (Oct 2013) Indicators of sound practice (10) http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b</p> <p>Supporting Professionalism in Admissions Programme (SPA)</p> <p>SPA is an independent and objective voice on UK higher education (HE) admissions. It leads on the development of fair admissions, providing an evidence base and recommendations for good practice and in helping universities and colleges maintain and enhance excellence and professionalism in admissions, student recruitment and widening participation/access. SPA works closely with HE institutions and other stakeholders to provide outputs as a resource for institutions which wish to develop and update their admissions practice and policy to enhance quality, transparency, reputation and fairness. Full information on SPA and its work can be found at www.spa.ac.uk.</p> <p>Source: http://www.spa.ac.uk/support/goodpractice/admissionspolicies</p> <p>SPA Good Practice Guidance – Admissions Policies 2014 http://www.spa.ac.uk/support/goodpractice/interviews http://www.spa.ac.uk/documents/AdmissionsPolicies/SPA_Admissions_Policy_Good_Practice_2014.pdf</p> <p>SPA checklist for higher education providers, April 2014</p> <p>SPA Example schedule for embedding the Quality Code, Chapter B2: Recruitment, selection and admission to higher education http://www.spa.ac.uk/information/qaaqualitycodeb2</p> <p>Building student engagement and belonging to Higher Education at a time of changes: What works Student Retention & Success programme – Summary Report By Professor Liz Thomas – March 2012</p>

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	<p>The Schwartz Report (Fair admissions to higher education: recommendations for good practice)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Universities & Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)▪ BIS Higher Education 'Students at the Heart of the System' <p>The College may be required to amend any of the above recommendations in line with new legislation and good practice.</p>
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