

Admissions Policy



OWNED BY:	VP, Student Experience and External Relations
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APPROVAL	Academic Board

Introduction

The purpose of Cirencester College is to provide the best possible stepping-stone from school to university, apprenticeships or work for young people within our catchment area. This means being ambitious for all our students and challenging all to excel but also supporting their development as independent, resilient and employable citizens.

As a sixth form College, we primarily serve 16-19-year olds, predominantly taking academic and technical level 3 qualifications, A-levels and T-levels, with a small Foundation level 2 programme. These equip students with the knowledge and skills to access the best opportunities nationally and internationally as well as locally.

The College is not selective but does have firm entry requirements, based on research linked to outstanding achievement, monitoring of progress and support for students.

All candidates are entitled to withdraw their applications to the College; we request that they notify us as soon as they have come to this decision, if they change their mind again we will reinstate their application providing there are places left on those courses.

There is no published date for guaranteed places, all applications are subject to meeting College entry requirements and the courses fitting on the College final timetable. Once an application has been made, applicants can still request to change their chosen courses subject to meeting entry requirements. All requests should be made to the Admissions Team.

The College operates an Admissions Panel process for those applicants who, due to exceptional circumstances, may not have had the opportunity to take/achieve the appropriate entry requirements. The applicant will undergo an appropriate form of assessment, after which the panel will decide what offer the college can make that is in line with the career aims of the applicant.

Inclusion

We are an inclusive college and actively seek to recruit, promote and celebrate a diverse student body and to challenge stereotypes. Our SEND offer sets out how we can enable learners to access the college and its curriculum.

Process

Applications

Young people can apply using the electronic form on the College's website. Applications open in the September prior to the intended academic year of study.

In the event that applications for courses are high, the College reserves the right to close applications at any point, with notice, prior to the start of the academic year. It also reserves the right to close individual courses, if required, and will offer a waiting list facility to allow people to take up places which subsequently become available or will offer an alternative where available.

Interviews and Offers

All applications are reviewed by the Admissions Team and followed up with an Admissions Interview, usually by phone. The Admissions team aim to arrange and conduct Admissions interviews within 10 working days of receipt of the application.

During the admissions interview, the applicants chosen programme of study is confirmed and Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) is provided from a member of the central team or academic staff. Opportunities for enrichment will be discussed at IAG/Admissions meeting. It is also an opportunity for applicants to get answers to any questions they may have. Applicants can request a further interview if necessary. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the IAG/Admission process and participate in the meeting. If offered a place, we ask applicants to accept/decline their offer through the applicant portal. Once applicants accept their offer, we will guarantee a place at college for that student. Applicants can still change their courses up to the point of enrolment, if there is space on the course they want to change to and if they meet the entry requirements and/or conditions of their offer.

Learning Support

Information about disability, learning support and medical conditions is collected and discussed at an IAG/Admission call or meeting. Students and their parents enter information about disability, medical conditions and support needs on the form. Any information provided is recorded and registered onto the central College Information Systems and, where necessary, passed to the Academic Support Department. In such cases, they may arrange an assessment of need and put in place a liaison/support programme, which may include a further meeting. The College has services to support students with High Needs and EHCPs; our ability to meet these needs is assessed by our High Needs, SEND and Transition Team and our SEND offer sets out how we can support learners.

The College Curriculum offer

Our curriculum offer is structured around available national qualifications (primarily A-levels and T-levels) but extends significantly beyond the contents of specifications.

We offer a well-established level 3 curriculum designed to provide a basis in skills and knowledge for those going on to HE nationally or apprenticeships and for those going directly into employment. This includes a wide range of A-levels, T-levels and Applied Generals/Technical subjects. The College is also able to offer combined Vocational and A-level

study programmes. These are facilitated by having a large A-level range and 6 column choice. This makes 9795 combinations of 3 A-levels available at the point of writing.

The A-level Progression programme (APP) is designed specifically for those who have just missed out on A-levels but want a second chance to qualify. It is made up of a combination of level 3 and level 2 elements which prepare learners for academic learning and leads onto A-level or vocational/technical study at Level 3.

The College also offers a small Foundation Level 2 programme which allows applicants to start courses which support them on their intended career path, an apprenticeship or progression to a T-level or L3 vocational programmes. As a result, the major focus is upon the confidence, social and academic skills and knowledge students have yet to master to succeed. Successful students may also apply for apprenticeships or move into employment locally.

Our Upgrade programme is pitched at level 1.5 focusses on students who need to work on their English and maths and develop social skills and confidence to access Level 2 or an apprenticeship. Admission to the course is by interview only.

In addition, there is a full-time ESOL programme, designed for refugees who need to work on their English skills to be able to access Level 2 or Level 3 programmes.

All students on 16-19 study programmes have access to pastoral support which is intended to increase student understanding of themselves and develop resilience.

The offer also includes a wide range of enrichment activities to develop social and vocational skills and prepare them for work and life. Students have opportunities to extend their networks, meet different people, be part of a team or learn to work on their own initiative. They can learn more about their career interest, debate and present, share a skill or interest, be active and be creative. The enrichment programme is spread across the whole timetable grid and supports mental health and wellbeing, as well as the development of work-related behaviours and citizenship.

The taught tutorial programme contains core elements of keeping safe (generally and on-line), contemporary issues including British Values, democracy and voting, causes of crime, global trends such as migration, poverty and the environment, sexual health and healthy relationships, keeping safe on-line, employability skills including job market information and trends, personal branding, interview skills and progression options, mental health and self-care, personal finance and other life skills.

Enrolment

The College reserves the right of admission but would always give a full explanation if admission was refused. The College will enrol students on to a programme of study appropriate for their current level of achievement, unless there are exceptional circumstances, and appropriate for their intended destination. Whenever possible, the College will make an alternative offer, if an applicant has not met the entry requirements for their original choice of course or programme or has applied late (from the Applications closing date or from GCSE Results Day onwards whichever is earlier) and the course of their choice is already full.

All full-time students, except in exceptional circumstances, will have substantial Study Programmes of a minimum of 600 hours; most students are expected to do above 640 planned

learning hours; please see Study Programmes Policy. Some courses will have costs attached for materials, equipment or visits, these are mostly detailed on our website or will be discussed at IAG/Admissions meeting, or at their enrolment appointment. In the case of financial hardship, the College does have bursary funds to support learners in appropriate cases.

All students not holding a Level 2 GCSE qualification in English or Maths at grade 4 or higher will be required to take GCSE Maths or English as part of their programme of study.

GCSE English and Maths at grade 4 minimum, is required to join a Level 3 programme such as T-levels, A-levels or Level 3 Vocational courses. GCSE English and Maths at grade 3 is required to join the Level 2 Foundation Programme and GCSE English and Maths grade 2 is required to join the Upgrade programme.

All applicants who have accepted their offer of a place will be offered an opportunity to book an enrolment appointment through the applicant portal. After the main enrolment period, places on your chosen courses cannot be guaranteed but we will always endeavour to find an appropriate alternative.

In the case of all students, failure to disclose information that could affect their safety, or that of staff and other students, may result in them being refused admission or asked to leave. The College considers the safety and welfare of all students its utmost priority, while at the same time trying to offer a fresh start to those deemed suitable for our College environment.

Late Starters

Young people who apply after the start of term will be considered up to 3 weeks into term. Places may be offered subject to there being space on the chosen courses. Where a course is full, the college will endeavour to offer applicants a suitable alternative. Any students starting late will be required to do some pre-start assessment work and will need to have in place, and agree to, a catch-up plan. Places offered will be conditional on completion of the catch-up work and a minimum of 95% attendance in the first term. The College reserves the right to withdraw the student where this condition is not met.

Transfers from another institution

Applications to transfer from another institution are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. The college will take transfers up to 3 weeks into Year 1 or Year 2, depending upon the compatibility of examination boards and their being space on the requisite course. Applicants will need to exceed the minimum entry requirements for their chosen programme. They will be asked to do some pre-start assessment work before joining the college. Later starts than this may occasionally be considered for Year 1 (A-level and T-level only) depending upon the circumstances of the individual and if their overall GCSE grade profile gives confidence that they may be able to catch-up (for T-levels majority grade 6s and A-levels majority grade 7s).

Pre-16 Applicants

The College is a post 16 institution and as such is not in a position to accept applications from those under 16 years of age at the start of the academic year they wish to join. In exceptional circumstances, we will consider students who are pre-16 if the applicant will have their 16th birthday before the October half term and will have the entry requirements to join a Level 3 programme of study. Places are subject to interview where we will look for a mature attitude to reassure ourselves that we can keep the learner safe in a post-16 environment.

Oversubscription

In the event of oversubscription, waiting list offers will be made to applicants based on a combination of the following criteria:

- the extent to which predicted GCSE grades (as assessed by the Admissions team, taking into account academic information available at the point of application) meet or exceed the minimum entry requirement; and
- each student's individual situation, including mitigating circumstances or possession of an EHCP.
- if a place becomes available, applicants will be allocated places in turn from the top of the waiting list
- enrolment will only be permitted if the applicant meets the conditions of their offer. Where an applicant is short of the entry criteria, an alternative place may be offered subject to availability.
- where, due to oversubscription, it is not possible to give an applicant a full learning programme, the College reserves the right to withdraw their offer.

Appeals

Applicants who have not been offered a place are entitled to appeal against that decision to the Admissions Appeals Panel.

Applicants wishing to lodge an appeal should email admissions@cirencester.ac.uk explaining the circumstances around their situation and why they feel they should be granted a place (max 500 words).

Appeals Panels will be arranged as and when necessary.

Application appeals will be processed within 10 term-time working days of the appeal.

Enrolment appeals will be heard within 21 days of publication of GCSE results. The decision made by the Appeals Panel is final.

Data Protection

When managing a student's personal data information, it will be collected in accordance with the College's data protection policy. Data collected is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of information relating to this policy and within the general data protection regulations (GDPR). Inappropriate access or disclosure of student data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the organisation's data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the College's disciplinary procedure.

Equality

As with all College Policies and Procedures due care has been taken to ensure that this policy is appropriate to all students regardless of sex, age, race, ethnicity, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation or religion/faith. The policy will be applied fairly and consistently whilst upholding the College's commitment to providing equality to all.

Related Legislation:

The following legislation applies to this policy

- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- College Single Equality Policy
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

Supporting documentation:

- SEN policy and local offer
- The application form
- Application portal documentation
- The curriculum plan
- The prospectus
- The website