


Document

Admissions Arrangements

2027-2028

Approved by:	Board of Trustees
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This policy applies to:	 DURHAM SIXTH FORM CENTRE

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1. Policy Introduction and Purpose Statement

- 1.1. We are committed to providing places in a fair and transparent way, on an open access basis. The school strives to be an inclusive post-16 provider offering all its students the opportunity to further their education, maximise their potential and successfully take the next steps in life, whether that is higher education, an apprenticeship or employment. Our curriculum is designed to allow students to follow appropriate study programmes and to build on their academic achievements at Key Stage 4.
- 1.2. This Policy aims to:
 - Explain how to apply for a place at Durham Sixth Form Centre.
 - Set out the arrangements for allocating places to the students who apply.
 - Provide information on the appeals process.

2. The Admissions Process

- 2.1. It is our intention to provide a personalised approach to the admission process at Durham Sixth Form Centre as the transition from Year 11 to Post 16 study is an important step in a young person's life.
- 2.2. It is vital that the right decision is taken both about the place of study, as well as the subject choices. In order to support young people and their parents/carers with this decision, we will:
 - Visit schools across the region, where we are able to do so, to inform young people about our school and our provision.
 - Host two open events each academic year (autumn term and spring term) for students who are considering making an application to study at Durham Sixth Form Centre.
 - Offer a personalised one-to-one interview and tour for all applicants.
 - Organise an Open Day(s) in the summer term for all applicants with a Conditional Offer to experience a real 'day in the life' as a student of Durham Sixth Form Centre prior to enrolment.
 - Enrol students individually, following the publication of Key Stage 4 results, to ensure that decisions taken about subject choices are appropriate and considered.
- 2.3. Please note:
 - Prospective students must apply to us via the online application form (available on the [Durham Sixth Form Centre website](#)) by the **last working day in April for September enrolment**. Any application received after this date will be considered a late application and will be reviewed in line with the oversubscription criteria, as outlined in **section 9**.
 - Prospective students should be provided with an interview time and date within 28 days of receipt of their application. If this is not the case, applicants are advised to contact the main office by telephone on 0191 383 0708 to enquire about their interview arrangements.
 - Prospective students must attend their interview at the allocated time and if that time is not suitable, they should contact us without delay to rearrange it. If a prospective student fails to attend their interview, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to provide an alternative.
 - At the interview, prospective students will be asked to share with us their most recent school report along with details of any mock examinations or external examinations that they have completed. The interview is also an opportunity for prospective students to share with us their school attendance information (usually included on their latest report) and anything else that they would like us to consider which demonstrates their aptitude and commitment to their education and/or beyond.
- 2.4. Durham Sixth Form Centre operates a September to August academic year only and therefore does not accept in-year admissions under any circumstance.

3. Minimum Entry Requirements

- 3.1. In order to study at Durham Sixth Form Centre, the prospective student must be of Year 11 school leaving age. Allowances will be made for prospective students who are in Year 11 but are either a year younger or older.
- 3.2. Prospective students must have:
 - A minimum of 5 GCSE qualifications at Grade 5 or above (this can include Mathematics and English Language if achieved at Grade 5) **and**
 - GCSE English Language and GCSE Mathematics both at a minimum of Grade 4.
 - Some subjects also have specific entry requirements in terms of GCSE results, details of which will be shared at interview and confirmed at enrolment.
- 3.3. It is worth noting that the minimum entry requirements and subject specific entry requirements are reviewed annually and may change.
- 3.4. We have five main study programmes: purely A Level; mainly A Level; mainly vocational; purely vocational and mixed.
- 3.5. Please be aware that a prospective student's GCSE results will determine which of these pathways we would consider to be most suitable for them. Please see **Appendix A** for further information.
- 3.6. It should also be noted that the qualification pathways and courses on offer may be subject to change in response to government qualification reforms.
- 3.7. At the one-to-one interview a Conditional Offer for a place of study will be made if a prospective student is able to demonstrate that they have the potential to meet our minimum entry requirements (**para. 3.1-3.2 above refers**) and have an appropriate commitment to learning which aligns with the ethos and high expectations of Durham Sixth Form Centre.
- 3.8. This includes a good record of attendance at secondary school, which demonstrates that they will be able to meet the expectations outlined in our Climate for Learning and Attendance Policy (the current Policy is available on our website [here](#)).
- 3.9. Offers are made on a conditional basis of the prospective student achieving the minimum entry requirements (outlined above) and the relevant subject specific entry requirements.

4. Conditional Offers

- 4.1. Conditional Offers will only become Firm Offers once prospective students enrol following the receipt of their GCSE results in the summer. Final decisions about admission and relevant subject choices will be taken during enrolment which takes place at the end of August/beginning of September.
- 4.2. Parents/carers are encouraged to attend the enrolment meeting along with the prospective student.
- 4.3. Please be aware that the availability of courses and certain course combinations may differ between the time of interview and enrolment depending upon demand and availability.
- 4.4. We reserve the right to make changes to our curriculum plan and/or withdraw courses as necessary.

5. Probationary Period

- 5.1. Durham Sixth Form Centre treats the first half term as an important transition period, known as the Probationary Period, which allows both students and staff to work together to ensure that students are on

the most appropriate courses, are working well, are happy and engaged and are developing good study skills and routines.

- 5.2. The Probationary Period will serve as a useful settling-in period in which they can be helped to develop as sixth form students rather than school pupils. For the minority of students, this period will allow them to reconsider their subject choices with appropriate guidance and support.
- 5.3. Occasionally, the Probationary Period will identify students for whom the sixth form environment is not working, for whatever reason. We will explore any additional support students may need during this period, and beyond.
- 5.4. Where there are significant concerns about attendance, punctuality, commitment or behaviour during this period contravening the Climate for Learning and Attendance Policy (available on our website [here](#)), the identified student may have their place withdrawn or they may have their Probationary Period extended in order to allow a further opportunity to demonstrate improvement during the Probationary Period.
- 5.5. At enrolment both students and parents/carers will be required to confirm their acceptance of these expectations by signing the Climate for Learning Agreement, as outlined in the Climate for Learning and Attendance Policy (available on our website [here](#)).
- 5.6. Durham Sixth Form Centre may withdraw a student's application, a Conditional Offer made following interview, or a place confirmed at enrolment if they become aware that information provided at application, interview or enrolment is false, incorrect, incomplete, or if relevant information is withheld.

6. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Provision

- 6.1. At Durham Sixth Form Centre, we are committed to providing an inclusive learning environment in which diversity is celebrated and valued, and where the needs of individual students are recognised and supported.
- 6.2. We have a fundamental belief in the entitlement of every student to fulfil their potential and will help to remove barriers to learning and support the wider development of all of our students through teaching and learning, our student support and pastoral systems and our enrichment programme.
- 6.3. We strive to ensure equal opportunity by offering places to all applicants including those who have an Education, Health and Care Plan provided that they meet the minimum entry requirements (**para. 3.1-3.2 refers**) and we are certain that we are able to meet individual needs and have sufficient staffing, resources and capacity to do so.
- 6.4. During enrolment, prospective students, and their parents/carers, have a number of opportunities to declare any important information. This might include, but is not limited to, any learning needs and disabilities, if they are considered vulnerable, have a medical condition or anything else which may affect their learning.
- 6.5. Collection of this information allows us to liaise with prospective students, their secondary school and parents/carers to ensure the study programme is appropriate, that any additional support is carefully planned and that the transition to Durham Sixth Form Centre is as smooth as possible.
- 6.6. This may also involve partnership work with external agencies. This is one of the reasons why we expect prospective students and their parents/carers to be open and honest with us about their additional needs at the earliest opportunity. Please refer to our SEND Policy, available on our website [here](#), for further details.

7. Special Consideration

- 7.1. If a prospective student does not meet the minimum entry criteria (**para. 3.1-3.2 refers**), they may still apply to Durham Sixth Form Centre requesting Special Consideration. This process involves the completion of a Special Consideration Form by the student and/or their parent/carer. The application form is reviewed on an individual basis by the Principal.
- 7.2. These applications will be considered towards the end of our enrolment process and prospective students will be informed if they have been successful usually at the beginning of September.
- 7.3. Special Consideration also applies to prospective students who are a year older than the standard Year 11 school leaving age (unless they are still taught in Year 11) and/or who have pursued further education at another institution for one year or less and who are no more than one year older than the standard Year 11 school leaving age.
- 7.4. It is worth noting that prospective students who are awarded a place of study at Durham Sixth Form Centre via the Special Consideration route may not always be allowed to pursue the course(s) of their choice. Their GCSE results and personal circumstances will be considered, alongside the availability of courses at that point.
- 7.5. All students who join us, including those who join as part of the Special Consideration process, must successfully pass the Probationary Period (**see section 5**) and adhere to any other additional specific expectations outlined at enrolment in order to proceed with their studies.
- 7.6. It should be noted, under the current Post-16 funding agreement, that any student who does not have a grade 4 pass in GCSE English Language or GCSE Mathematics has to resit the qualification.
- 7.7. Should a prospective student be successful in securing a place to study at Durham Sixth Form Centre through the Special Consideration application process and they do not have a grade 4 in either qualification then their study programme whilst enrolled at the school must include studying the respective GCSE course until such a time a grade 4 or above is achieved.

8. Restarting at Durham Sixth Form Centre

- 8.1. Some students who leave DSFC during Year 12, as a result of struggling with significant medical issues or personal circumstances, may wish to restart Year 12 in the following academic year. This restart is on a conditional basis with the student having to reapply under our Year 12 Internal Repeaters route.
- 8.2. Students should contact the school, in the second half of the summer term, to request the 'Year 12 Repeaters: Expression of Interest Form', which they should fill out and submit in line with the instructions on the form.
- 8.3. A review will be conducted, following the submission of an application, to determine whether the student is fit to return to study. Medical evidence may be required to demonstrate that they are fit to study. All applications will be considered at the point of enrolment, at the end of August, and a decision will be made by the Principal at this point.
- 8.4. If a student is offered the opportunity of a restart, they must restart their education in the following academic year. Such students must state that they are sufficiently recovered and ready for the restart of their studies, and the challenges this may present, and that they are well enough to access face-to-face Level 3 education, in line with this Policy and the Climate for Learning and Attendance Policy, at the point of the restart. They must also accept that they must adhere to the expectations stipulated within this Policy and the Climate for Learning and Attendance Policy, including those linked to attendance.

- 8.5. Any student who restarts Year 12 will be closely monitored in order to ensure their return to study is successful. In addition, students may not be able to restart Year 12 on the same courses due to funding restrictions.
- 8.6. Whilst every effort will be made to follow this Policy, circumstances may not always allow this or may render parts of the Policy inappropriate. Individuals will be treated fairly and in line with legislation in all instances.
- 8.7. All students who join us, including those who join as part of the Year 12 Repeaters process, must successfully pass the Probationary Period (**see section 5**) and adhere to any other additional specific expectations outlined at enrolment in order to proceed with their studies.

9. Oversubscription

- 9.1. We carefully monitor applications and project enrolment figures to assess the likelihood of Durham Sixth Form Centre being oversubscribed. In the event that we expect to be oversubscribed, places will be allocated at enrolment in order of the prioritisation categories identified below (**para. 9.3-9.13**).
- 9.2. Students will be invited to enrol in order of the categories set out below. In all cases, they must meet our minimum entry requirements. We do not give priority to applications from students that are enrolled at particular schools.

Category 1: Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) and Looked After Children (LAC)/Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)

- 9.3. Following a statutory consultation process, applicants with an EHCP which names Durham Sixth Form Centre, or a Year 11 LAC/PLAC, irrespective of their secondary school, who submitted their application by the application deadline, attended an interview, were given a Conditional Offer and who attended their enrolment appointment.

Category 2: Parent/carer is a Providence Learning Partnership (Trust) member of staff

- 9.4. Applicants whose parents/carers work within the Trust. A parent as defined by Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. The Trust will classify a parent as a member of staff who is a biological parent, anyone with parental responsibility or who has care of a child or young person (lives with them).

Category 3: On time - Year 11 applicants

- 9.5. Year 11 prospective students who submitted their application by the application deadline, attended an interview, were given a Conditional Offer and who attended their enrolment appointment.

Category 4: Late - Year 11 applicants (between the application deadline and 31 May)

- 9.6. Year 11 late applicants that submitted their application after the application deadline, attended an interview, were given a Conditional Offer and who attended their enrolment appointment.

Category 5: Very late - Year 11 applicants (after 1 June)

- 9.7. Year 11 very late applicants that submitted their application after the application deadline, however, it has not been possible to arrange an interview before the summer holidays but they meet the entry criteria and have attended their enrolment appointment.

Category 6: Year 12 Internal Repeaters

- 9.8. Year 12 internal repeaters who have completed and submitted a Year 12 Repeaters: Expression of Interest Form which has been reviewed and approved by the Principal. See **section 8** for more information and terms.

Category 7: Special Considerations - Year 11 applicant who does not meet the minimum entry criteria

- 9.9. Year 11 prospective Special Consideration students who submitted their application by the application deadline, attended an interview, were given a Conditional Offer but have fallen short of the minimum entry criteria.

Category 8: On-time applicants - not in Year 11

- 9.10. Subject to the age restriction, prospective students who submitted their application by the application deadline (informed by a good reference), attended an interview, were given a Conditional Offer and who attended their enrolment appointment.
- 9.11. Note: Not in Year 11 – no more than one year older than the standard Year 11 school leaving age. For example, students already in their first year of post-16 education elsewhere, or not currently in education, employment or training.

Category 9: Late - not in Year 11 (between the application deadline and 31 May)

- 9.12. Subject to the age restriction, prospective students who submitted their application after the application deadline (informed by a good reference), attended an interview, were given a Conditional Offer and who attended their enrolment appointment.

Category 10: All others

- 9.13. Including, but not restricted to:
- Applicants that failed to attend interviews but subsequently ask for their applications to be considered.
 - Applicants that withdraw their applications but subsequently ask for their applications to be considered.
 - Applicants that fail to attend enrolment day and do not provide advance notification that they are unable to attend.
 - Applicants for whom applications are withdrawn by the school due to a lack of response or a failure to correctly engage in the admissions process.

10. Appeals

- 10.1. If you believe this Policy has not been applied accurately, an appeal can be made through the school's Complaints Procedure, a copy of which is available on our website [here](#), addressed for the attention of the Principal.

11. Monitoring arrangements

- 11.1. This Policy will be reviewed and approved annually by the Trust Board.

12. Appendix A: Study Pathways

- 12.1. We will enrol students on the following pathways, as guidance, subject to them meeting specific-subject entry criteria:

Results achieved:	Study pathway:
All of your GCSE grades are 6s or higher	Purely A Level courses.
Most of your GCSE grades are 6s or higher	A mixed study programme of A Level and vocational level 3 courses. The study pathway may be mainly A Level courses, mainly vocational courses or an equal mix of the two, depending on GCSE grades, student preferences and staff guidance.
Most of your GCSE grades are 5s	Vocational level 3 courses.

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