

ST PATRICK'S



St Patrick's College

Recruitment, Selection and Admissions Statement

2017 - 2018

Version: 1.0

Approved by Senior Management Team; September 2017

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Quality Assurance Mapping

This policy and procedure has been aligned with to the following legislation and/or external quality assurance frameworks:

- i. UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Part B;**
 - Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education
 - Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement

- ii. UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Part C: Information about Higher Education Provision education provision**

- iii. The Data Protection Act (1998)**

1. Introduction

- 1.1. St. Patrick's College understands that the success and continuity of its programmes is underpinned by the recruitment selection and admission of students who have the appropriate academic background, aptitude, professional experience and motivation not merely to succeed in their programme of study, but to fully engage with the institution and jointly enhance the quality of the learning opportunities.
- 1.2. The College is committed to the use of robust and rigorous processes to ensure the recruitment, selection and admission of the most suitable candidates onto programmes of study at an appropriate level. This commitment is central to the College's assurance of academic standards and integrity, enabling students to fully develop their academic, personal and professional potential within a supportive academic community.
- 1.3. The *Recruitment, Selection and Admissions Statement* outlines the core principals governing the College's approach to guiding applicants onto the most suitable programmes and assuring that they are capable meeting the requirements of study prior to their enrolment through the assessment of genuine evidence. It also seeks to define the remits and responsibilities of those involved in the recruitment and admission of new students.
- 1.4. Specific policies and procedures governing admission onto individual programmes may vary in accordance with the field and level of study, as well the requirements of the award validating or accrediting institutions with which the College works in partnership; specific procedures are captured in separate documents and can be made available on request from the Quality Assurance Office.
- 1.5. The admission of individual applicants is at the discretion of St. Patrick's College having regard to the safety and welfare of the College community and the general principles as outlined in its *Equality and Diversity Policy* and *Inclusive Practice Handbook*.

2. Guiding Principals

- 2.1. St. Patrick's College's recruitment, selection and admissions policies and procedures are informed by the Quality Assurance Agency's Quality Code for Higher Education, in particular *Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education*.
- 2.2. Whilst specific recruitment and admissions processes may vary between programmes, the following guiding principles will be applied universally in all instances:
 - 2.2.1. The College considers all applications to study on the basis of the applicant's ability and potential to succeed within the College's learning environment.

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2.2.2. The College aims, through its recruitment, selection and admissions policies and procedures, to create a student body that is:

- capable of maintaining high academic standards and levels of achievement;
- balanced and diverse in terms of background and experience, with all the educational and cultural benefits that this brings;
- motivated to engage with and contribute to the intellectual and cultural vitality of the College's academic community.

2.2.3. The College seeks to achieve these aims by:

- encouraging applications from those with the motivation and academic ability to thrive, whatever their background;
- diligently assessing each application in accordance with stringent processes appropriate to the programme applied for;
- using a variety of means to assess that applicants have provided genuine documentary evidence to support their admission, and are themselves genuinely committed to study;
- ensuring that applied for programmes represent academic progression, taking into account an applicant's prior learning.

2.2.4. The procedures through which The College assesses applications and offers places are designed to be:

- easily understood by candidates;
- transparent;
- fair;
- based on principles that are applied consistently across all of the College's programmes.

2.2.5. In executing its recruitment and admissions processes, The College always strives to:

- provide a responsive, professional and student-focused service;
- ensure that applicants are guided through the application processes by authorised and competent advisors and officers, who are extensively vetted, trained and kept well informed about learning opportunities on offer from the College;

- Inform prospective students, at the earliest opportunity, of any significant changes to a programme to which they have applied. Prospective students will be advised promptly of the options available in such circumstances;
- relate feedback, if requested by an applicant, as to why an application was unsuccessful;
- provide a clear and accessible complaints process for admissions-related complaints which facilitates fair and timely resolution;
- give successful applicants sufficient information to enable them to make the transition from prospective to current student.

3. Governance and oversight: Promoting a shared understanding of admissions processes amongst all involved in recruitment, selection and admissions

- 3.1. A collegiate approach to recruitment, selection and admissions is promoted through the College's Senior Management Team; this forum brings together staff members from the Student Recruitment and Admissions teams, as well as senior academics and student service area managers to ensure that the development of admissions policies and procedures are informed and guided by The College's strategic priorities.
- 3.2. Student Recruitment and Admissions management ensure that up-to-date and accurate information about the College's learning opportunities is disseminated to all staff members as well as those representing St. Patrick's College externally. In doing so it will provide training and information sessions as required to the College's senior academics and management staff to ensure a common understanding of recruitment and admissions processes and the specific responsibilities of those supporting them at all procedural stages.

4. Assisting prospective students in making informed decisions about their study options

- 4.1. St. Patrick's College ensures that applicants have access to comprehensive information about its learning opportunities, from the first point of contact. In addition to guidance from advisors, information about learning opportunities is made readily available via the College's main website and hard-copy prospectuses.
- 4.2. Potential applicants can also receive information about learning opportunities via:
 - In-centre open days to provide applicants with information about the College's programmes;

- Factsheets, programme brochures, e-shots, landing pages, websites, Google display banners, remarketing adverts, print adverts, outdoor media (as and when campaigns are run), presentations, social media, PR, affiliate marketing, external website banners, internal website banners;
 - Industry exhibition events, school visits, career seminars;
 - outreach programmes offering careers guidance for prospective applicants.
- 4.3. The College ensures its programmes are promoted by staff who have first-hand experience of both the academic execution of programmes and the recruitment process adopted by employers in the appropriate sector.
- 4.4. When a suitable mode of study has been discerned through consultation between the applicant and the advisor, applicants will be actively guided through the application and enrolment processes, including making the application, supplying supporting documents and making payment.

5. Guidance for prospective students making the transition to study

- 5.1. Offer, confirmation of acceptance and pre-enrolment e-mails make clear to students what they are required to do in order to enrol on the programme and will include details such as:
- programme start dates;
 - timetable;
 - fee and payment information; and
 - any actions to complete before the programme commences.
- 5.2. Unsuccessful candidates will be notified of the outcome and the reasons for the decision and will be referred to a member of the Recruitment Team if they wish to discuss their options. If they have any reservations about the way their application has been handled they may be guided to *the Admissions Complaints Policy and Procedure*.
- 5.3. Following the issuance of an offer, students will be sent a communication by the Admissions team explaining where they need to go, when and what they will need to bring.
- 5.4. Enrolled students will receive a comprehensive programme of induction sessions to enable them to efficiently integrate into College life. This includes presentations from academics, support staff and student services to prepare students for the rigors of study to ensure they are aware of the study support opportunities made available by the College.

- 5.5. The induction for new students will include sessions about the course structure, administrative and student support services available, and other guidance on study skills and learning resources.
- 5.6. The information imparted to new students during inductions will be included for reference in Student Handbooks and Programmes Handbooks, which provide guidance on key policies and procedures as well as useful general information about student life.

6. Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity

- 6.1. In applying its recruitment and admissions processes, the College aims to encourage and maintain equality of opportunity for all applicants in accordance with its *Equality and Diversity Policy*.

Candidates with Disabilities or Specific Learning Difficulties:

- 6.2. Admissions decisions and offers are made without reference to individual disability or other special needs, and are subject only to agreeing satisfactory learning support arrangements with each prospective student.
- 6.3. Applicants are encouraged to declare any disabilities and/or specific learning difficulties (SpLDs) on their application form. Declarations will then be passed to the Director of Student Services and a consultation will be offered to the applicant. During this consultation the applicant will be advised of the available support and funding opportunities that can be provided to alleviate barriers to study, enabling the applicant to make informed decisions before any commitments are made.
- 6.4. Special support arrangements will then be communicated by Director of Student Services to the Student Administration and Admissions teams to ensure the applicant's requirements are met. Where students are affected by a severe sensory or mobility impairment, additional building accessibility or evacuation plans may be put in place.
- 6.5. Details of declared disabilities or SpLDs will be treated as controlled information and shared internally in accordance with the set principle and procedures of the College's Data Protection Policy.

More information is available on via the Inclusive Practice Handbook which will be made available on request from the Director of Student services.

Recruitment of Candidates with Criminal Convictions

- 6.6. It is the policy of St. Patrick's College to ask all applicants who disclose a relevant criminal conviction to provide further information as part of its duty of care. This information will be assessed for the potential risk of harm to others prior to the College

making an offer of admission. The Academic Registrar will make this assessment following an interview with the applicant. After the assessment the College will keep criminal conviction information sealed and confidential in the applicant's centrally held record.

7. Monitoring Admissions Information

- 7.1. The College implements robust management information systems to facilitate the analysis of student admissions data and ensure effective oversight of admissions processes. This information is cross checked internally against student progression, retention and completion data to promote evidence based development of College policies supporting learning and achievement.
- 7.2. Statistical admissions reports are shared on a daily basis to ensure that further ensure that Senior Management are cognisant of emergent patterns, trends in admissions data indicative of developing risks and can respond accordingly.
- 7.3. Reports are additionally shared with student recruitment teams to ensure that caps on relevant programmes are met and also all places on programmes are being filled.

8. Allocation of Responsibilities

- 8.1. The College ensures that its recruitment, selection and admissions principles and processes are annually reviewed and enhanced to ensure that they:
 - remain current and effective;
 - continue to accurately reflect the missions and strategic objectives of the College;
 - meet customer, professional, academic, legislative and regulatory requirements.
- 8.2. The Senior Management Team, along with the Admissions and Student Recruitment departments, are jointly responsible for the design, delivery and enhancement of the College's recruitment, selection and admissions processes to ensure the fulfilment of its guiding principles.
- 8.3. **The Student Recruitment Team is responsible for:**
 - 8.3.1. recruiting academically talented and diverse students to enhance The College's quality and prestige.
 - 8.3.2. providing potential applicants with accurate and reliable information about the learning opportunities on offer from the College at the first point of contact;
 - 8.3.3. identifying the applicant's academic and/or professional background and advising on the most suitable programme to enhance that applicant's career prospects;

- 8.3.4. helping applicants to make informed decisions about the learning opportunities they would like to pursue;
- 8.3.5. efficiently guiding applicants through the process of making an application;
- 8.3.6. maintaining contact and supporting the new student until they start their programme.

8.4. The Admissions Department is responsible for:

- 8.4.1. working closely with Programme Leaders to develop admissions policies and entry criteria specific to different programmes;
 - 8.4.2. assessing all applications against the entry criteria and compiling all supporting documentation from applicants;
 - 8.4.3. conducting application processes in accordance with any regulations stipulated by the award's validating partner institution;
 - 8.4.4. managing student funding eligibility and assisting with applications;
 - 8.4.5. ensuring the applicants are kept informed about the progression of their applications and effectively communicated with at every step of the process;
 - 8.4.6. making final offers of acceptance to study and issuing letters;
 - 8.4.7. communicating feedback to unsuccessful applicants if requested to do so;
 - 8.4.8. Inviting accepted students who have met the programme entry criteria to enrolment / induction events;
 - 8.4.9. Issuing student ID cards to eligible applicants;
 - 8.4.10. enrolling students onto programmes and coordinating credit transfers or exemptions;
 - 8.4.11. dealing with complaints about the application process swiftly and effectively.
- 8.5. At the end of the induction events the Admissions Team will compile class lists. These lists will be used to complete a cross check against the accepted students.
- 8.6. The Admissions Team will contact all 'missing' students to confirm whether they still intend to take up their place and will update the course College's administration team on a daily basis of the outcome of these contacts.
- 8.7. In addition to regular provision of management diagnostic information, the Admissions team will keep the College's Management informed of any anomalies, inconsistencies or procedural risks arising in a timely fashion.

8.8. The Admissions Team will additionally make referrals to the College's Admissions Panel in certain cases as defined in stated policies and procedures. It will also furnish the Admissions Panel with all documentation required for making assessment of referred cases (*See Admissions Panel Terms of Reference*).

8.9. The College's Admissions and Attendance Panel (AAP) is responsible for:

8.9.1. Reviewing cases referred to it by the Admissions Team and making holistic assessments as to their fitness to engage with the programme within the broader context of an applicant's academic and personal achievements, as well as indications of motivation and commitment.

8.9.2. Keeping detailed records of all such decisions and the rationale supporting them. *Further information is given in the AAP's Terms of Reference.*

9. Feedback, Complaints and Appeals

9.1. The Admissions team or designated academic will provide email feedback to any unsuccessful applicant on receipt of a written or email request made to admissioninquiry@st-patricks.ac.uk or via post to the college's address.

9.2. St. Patrick's College reserves the right to refuse admission to any of its programmes to an applicant who does not meet the entry requirements specified for the programme. The decision made by the College is final and there is no appeal against any decision concerning selection or admission. However, if the applicant feels that the application process for their programme has not been conducted correctly and has evidence to support this, then they may use the Admissions Complaints Procedure to pursue this.

9.3. The College operates an efficient, effective and courteous admissions service to all applicants. In the event of a problem occurring at any stage of the recruitment, selection or admission process, the College will seek to resolve the matter informally in a timely and effective manner. Should an informal resolution not be possible then a formal complaint may be made in writing and sent to the above address.

9.4. Such complaints may include:

- a complaint about the College's handling of a query or an application for admission for example a procedural error, irregularity or maladministration; or
- allegations that admissions criteria were not applied correctly or even-handedly.

9.5. Applicants can expect the College to keep them duly informed about the progress of their complaint at regular intervals. *Further information can be found on the Admissions Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Policy, available on the College's main website.*

10. Monitoring Review and Reporting

- 10.1. Responsibility for reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the principles given in this statement, as well as the processes supporting them lies with the College's Senior Management Team. Policies will be reviewed on a yearly basis by the SMT, as well as senior Admissions and Recruitment staff, to ensure they are effective and compliant with all external requirements.

11. Applicant's Personal Data

- 11.1. St. Patrick's College collects and retains certain types of data, in various formats, about its applicants, current and past students in order that it can fulfil its functions as an education provider. The College complies with the Data Protection Act (1998) with regard to the treatment of applicants' personal data.
- 11.2. The College will further comply with the directives of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as and when these come into force.

Further information can be found in the College's Data Protection Policy, available on request from the Quality Assurance Department.

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**The document owner is responsible for maintaining and updating the content of this document and ensuring that it reflects current practice at the College.*

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