



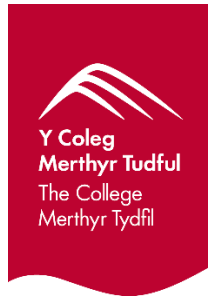
## **Admissions Policy**

**Policy originator: Assistant Principal Curriculum**

**Equality Impact Assessment Completed: November 2023**

**Approved by: College Executive**

**Review Date: June 2025**



## ADMISSIONS POLICY

### Overview

The College Merthyr Tydfil's Vision is *'To be the college of choice for young people, adults, employers and wider partners'*

Underpinning this vision, our mission is to *'transform lives through working together'*. Inclusive within this mission, our Admissions Policy sets out the principles and procedures for admissions at the college, ensuring that all individual learners seeking a place at the college are appropriately matched to a programme or course of study that enables them to achieve the very best they can and progress on to a destination of their choice.

### Scope of the Policy

The Admissions policy refers to all elements of the learner's first experience – from initial enquiry through to enrolment and induction. This includes the procedures in place from initial learner enquires, information advice and guidance (IAG) provision, formal application, selection interview, offers, welcome to college, enrolment and induction events.

### Welsh language

We welcome correspondence and applications in Welsh. All applications and correspondence in Welsh will be dealt with using the same principles and timescales outlined below.

### Additional Learning Support

Applicants are encouraged to disclose any Additional Learning Needs so that we can offer effective support. The College Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCo) can provide advice and support to learners, parents, carers/ guardians, and members of staff. Once an offer is made and/ or accepted the college will ascertain any learning support currently being offered so that the college can prepare support in advance of the applicant being enrolled. The ALNCo will assess applicants' support requirements for interview and on program. Disclosures made at application, at interview or at enrolment, will all be referred to the ALNCo. Applicants with Additional Learning Needs and/or disabilities can request a confidential interview to discuss their particular needs. They may choose to bring an advocate to that meeting.

### Criminal Convictions and Pending Criminal Convictions

If an applicant declares a pending or criminal conviction more details will be requested by the Admissions Team and the applicant will be required to complete a Criminal Record Information Form (CR1). The CR1 Form will be assessed by the Safeguarding & Wellbeing Officer in conjunction with the Head of Division for the area applied for. If the assessment is agreed as 'no risk' or 'low risk' by both members of the assessment group named above then the application will be processed as normal. If the application is agreed to be 'medium risk', 'high risk' or 'unacceptable' by one or both of the group then the application will be escalated to an Inclusion Panel.

## 1. Principles

The college will apply the following principles to all enquiries and course applications, including applications for full-time and part-time further education and higher education courses and applications for work based learning and Tydfil Training programmes and apprenticeship schemes.

- 1.1. The college is committed to operating a fair, transparent and inclusive admissions process which considers all applicants on their individual merits and promotes equal access to all of its programmes of study.
- 1.2. The college will provide up to date and accurate information on the courses on offer, entry requirements and associated course fees, scholarships, bursaries and other funding grants.
- 1.3. The college will provide impartial advice and guidance to all potential applicants and learners.
- 1.4. The college will respond to all enquiries and applications within 24 hours (during Monday-Friday) by text message and email and within seven days by letter.
- 1.5. The college will ensure that individual learning needs are identified and assessed and that effective support mechanisms are put into place to ensure applicants and learners are appropriately matched to a programme or course of study and that any specialised or additional support is put into place from the start of their course. Please note that evidence in support of an Additional Learning Need is a statutory requirement and the college must have evidence before the support can be in place. Learners will also be required to sign a 'Data Protection' form.
- 1.6. The college, in considering and processing applications, will abide by all relevant and appropriate legislation and policies, including the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 (not ALN Bill), Health & Safety at Work Act Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015, Equality Act 2010 alongside our own internal Strategic Equality Plan, Race Equality Strategy and Action Plan, Fitness to Study Policy and Safeguarding Policy.
- 1.7. The college is committed to the promotion of the Welsh language and will strive to address and support the needs of Welsh speakers in accordance with the college's Welsh Language Strategy and related policies.
- 1.8. The college aims to offer appropriate course provision for all applicants but where its courses or facilities would not be appropriate the college will refer applicants to Careers Wales for impartial guidance about other education and training opportunities.
- 1.9. The college is committed to multi-agency working and will, where appropriate, share information regarding applicants who are participating in multi-agency arrangements, in compliance with the college's General Data Protection Regulations and Privacy Policy.
- 1.10. The college will provide timely information on all course enrolment dates and times and provide a well-organised, efficient and enjoyable first experience for all learners.

## 2. Applicant Code of Conduct

The college will ensure that the Admissions Policy is accessible and understandable to all applicants. In return, all applicants must:

- 2.1 Provide accurate information on their application form
- 2.2 Satisfy the entry requirements for admission to the proposed course or programme of study.
- 2.3 Demonstrate a strong commitment to further study and the ethos of the college.
- 2.4 Satisfy the terms and conditions of the college's fee policy, including the registration fee.
- 2.5 Provide evidence of their previous achievements at their current school, college or workplace.
- 2.6 Undertake an initial skills screener and any other appropriate assessments or provide information as necessary to allow the college to determine their suitability for the course and support any additional learning needs.

## 2.7 Agree to adhere to the College's Learner Behaviour Policy

Please note that any applicant owing money to the college must make arrangements to pay any outstanding debt prior to acceptance or admittance onto a further college course.

### 3. Right to refuse admission

The college may in its absolute discretion refuse an application to study at the college on the following non-exhaustive grounds:

- 3.1. If an applicant is unable to demonstrate the minimum entry requirements for the course or programme applied for and there are no suitable alternative courses that the applicant wishes to study at the college (note in these circumstances the college will liaise with our Employability Team or Careers Wales for advice and guidance on alternative providers and courses)
- 3.2. If the course or programme applied for is undersubscribed (with the result that its delivery is not viable for the college or its learners) or oversubscribed
- 3.3. If an applicant has a pending criminal conviction or actual criminal conviction which, prevents him/her from undertaking the course or programme applied for.
- 3.4. If the college considers, in its reasonable opinion, that the applicant may endanger or pose a risk of harm to college staff or learners.

#### International students

The college does not have a Tier 4 licence and therefore cannot sponsor a non EU student to enter the UK and study at the college. The college could therefore refuse admission to non EU nationals who are not able to provide sufficient evidence that they will be able to meet the costs of their study together with a Passport or National ID card as proof of identity.

#### Criminal Convictions and Pending Criminal Convictions

The College has a duty of care towards learners and staff, together with a responsibility to ensure a safe learning and working environment for all. If you have unspent criminal convictions or have been charged with an offence(s), then you will be required to complete a Criminal Record Information form (CR1). The CR1 Form will be assessed by the Safeguarding & Wellbeing Officer in conjunction with the Head of Division for the area applied for. If the assessment is agreed as 'no risk' or 'low risk' by both members of the assessment group named above then the application will be processed as normal. If the application is agreed to be 'medium risk', 'high risk' or 'unacceptable' by one or both of the group then the application will be escalated to an Inclusion Panel. Please note too, that all learners are required to notify the college of pending charges and convictions which may imposed whilst studying at the college (i.e. following enrolment).

## **Inclusion Panel**

The college has a dedicated inclusion panel, which will convene to discuss any applications that need further consideration or may be deemed to be 'medium' or 'high' risk. All information relating to the learner will be presented to the panel and the panel will make a final decision about the learner's application. The decision will be based on whether the medium or high risks presented can be managed appropriately with additional conditions or support from the full range of learner support teams. If it is agreed that the risk is manageable the learner and/or all relevant external agencies will be notified in writing. The learner must respond in writing stating that they accept the conditions and/or support otherwise they will not be enrolled. If it is agreed that the risk is not manageable the learner and/or all relevant external agencies will be notified in writing.

Learners or agencies may appeal the decision. Appeals will be considered by the Principal who will be provided with all supporting documentation. The learner and/or external agency will be informed of the decision within 10 working days. The Principal's decision will be final.

## **4. Management and Implementation of the Policy**

The Assistant Principal Curriculum has the strategic responsibility for the effective management, implementation and review of the policy and procedures.

The Assistant Principal Curriculum, Admissions team and Divisional Admission Officers will be responsible for the day to day administration and implementation of the policy.

Heads of Division have a responsibility to give full and active support to the policy by ensuring the policy is known, understood and implemented across the college.

Divisional Admissions Officers will have responsibility to work with each division to monitor that the Admissions Policy is being adhered to, monitor progress of applications and ensure that communication with all applicants is being undertaken within the timescales stipulated in the policy.

The Admissions team will provide support with the interview process. This will involve attending the interviews alongside course tutor or conducting the interviews on behalf of the course tutor. All staff involved in the interview process will have responsibility for abiding by the college's Interview Protocol and are provided with interview guidance.

The Admissions team will be responsible for liaising with the Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator and Head of Learner Support and Wellbeing to maintain an accurate record of learners disclosing an additional learning or mental health and wellbeing need to ensure that the appropriate level of support is put into place for learners in a timely manner, on receipt of ALN supporting evidence and a signed Data Protection form.

The First Experience Group (Chaired by the Assistant Principal Curriculum) will have responsibility for the organisation of the college's enrolment, induction and welcome week activities.

All Admissions Officers have now received Information, Advice and Guidance training from Careers Wales up to NVQ level 3 standard.

Applications for Work Based Learning (WBL) and Tydfil Training courses will be redirected to Tydfil Training consortium. Admission to these programmes will be consistent with the criteria for admittance to other college courses, dependent on their programme of study and in compliance with WBL regulations and frameworks.

## **5. Monitoring and Review**

This policy and the implementation arrangements which underpin it will be reviewed annually by the Assistant Principal Curriculum in liaison with the College Management Team. The review will also take into consideration learner feedback arising from the college's Learner Senedd, Learner Focus Groups, the college's First Experience survey, the Learner Voice survey and the National Student Survey.

## **6. Supporting Documents**

- Appendix 1 Admissions Procedures and Flow Chart for Further and Higher Education Learners
- Appendix 2 Admissions Procedures for Preparation for Life and Work Learners
- Appendix 3 Interview Protocol

## APPENDIX ONE: ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES FOR FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION LEARNERS

The procedures described in this document refer to prospective learners intending to join further education or higher education programmes of study delivered at The College Merthyr Tydfil. Admissions for Work Based Learning traineeships and apprenticeships have separate procedures which are also referenced in this policy and detailed in the flowcharts provided in the appendices.

### First Experience at the College Merthyr Tydfil

#### *The start of the learner journey*

**Step 1: Promoting the college offer** - The college will publish a bilingual annual course guide and update its Website in September of each academic year. The course guide will contain detailed information on all courses and entry qualifications offered at the college together with a bilingual application form.

**Step 2: Initial enquiries** – The Admissions team and Heads of Division attend and participate in many school events across Merthyr Tydfil. This can comprise presentations to year 11 assemblies or groups of learners or being available to advise both prospective learners and their parents/carers at school events such as Parents Evenings, Careers Fairs and Options Evenings.

Potential applicants are provided with the opportunity to make initial enquires about courses and complete a postcard registration form. This enables the college to send all enquirers a copy of the prospectus (if they have not already received it), any course specific information, an application form and also invitations to forthcoming open evenings and events.

Alternatively, enquiries may be made directly to the college in person, via email, by telephone, by social media or via the college's Website. Where an approach is made direct to the teaching department, the enquiry should be directed to the Admissions department. Learners who wish to apply to college but are unsure of their course choice can request advice and guidance from the Admissions Team. This is available via telephone or face to face with the learner being invited in to talk to a member of the Admissions team or attend a college open evening.

**Step 3: Attending an Open Event** – The College Merthyr Tydfil holds five open events throughout the year to provide an opportunity for potential learners to find out about the courses on offer, meet subject staff and current learners, see the facilities on offer and learn all about the pastoral support and extra-curricular opportunities available at the college. Potential learners can register an interest or make an application during the open event.

College Careers Advisers and Careers Wales Advisers are also available at the Open Events to provide additional, impartial information, advice and guidance. Details of the Open Events are published well in advance, in the college prospectus, on the college website, in local schools, in local media and through banner advertising in the local area.

**Step 4: Making an application** – Learners can apply directly to the college:

- On-line via the college website at: [www.merthyr.ac.uk](http://www.merthyr.ac.uk)
- Through a paper application form
- Through an open event as above.
- Through a school based application session



On receipt of an application, the applicants details will be uploaded into the college management information system and set up an individual applicant record. The learner will be sent an acknowledgement text and email message within 24 hours. Following this, within ten working days from receipt of application, the Admissions Team will contact the learner to invite them to attend an interview and an initial skills screener, where applicable.

As part of the admissions process, the applicant will be invited to download the college app, thus enabling them to track the status of their application, receive instant push notifications, book their own interview slots and have access to key applicant information.

**Step 5: Additional Learning or Mental Health and Wellbeing Needs** – Learners disclosing any additional learning or mental health and wellbeing needs will be referred to the college’s Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator or Head of Learner Support and Wellbeing who will liaise with the learner and appropriate external agencies to ensure that the appropriate level of support is able to be provided.

**Step 6: Interview** -All learners who may not have received an interview at our Open Event will be invited to attend an interview with Admissions staff and/or Subject tutors. Interviews are conducted throughout the year, from November through to August/September. Interview dates will be arranged within 10 working days of receipt of an application. All learners attending an interview will be sent a text message reminder the day before the interview. All staff carrying out the interviews will follow the college’s Interview Protocol. Interviews may be conducted via Microsoft Teams, by telephone or in person at the college. The applicant will be asked their preference

**Step 7: The course offer** – Learners will be notified of the outcomes of the interview within 24 hours by text and email **and within seven working days by letter**. This may be an unconditional offer of a place at college (for applicants who have already achieved their qualifications) or a conditional offer of a place at college.

Applicants declaring an additional learning need will also be contacted by the college’s Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator.

Applicants declaring a mental health and wellbeing need will also be contacted by the college’s Wellbeing team.

If it is not deemed appropriate that a learner is offered a place on the programme they have applied for, the applicant will be offered further advice and guidance from Admissions Team /College Careers Adviser so that alternative progression routes at college can be considered. The Admissions team will then arrange further selection interviews as appropriate.

**Step 8: WEST Initial Screener** – Following the course offer, applicants will be asked to sit a WEST assessment. This is used to further determine the applicant’s suitability for the course and to assess if support is required for literacy and numeracy.

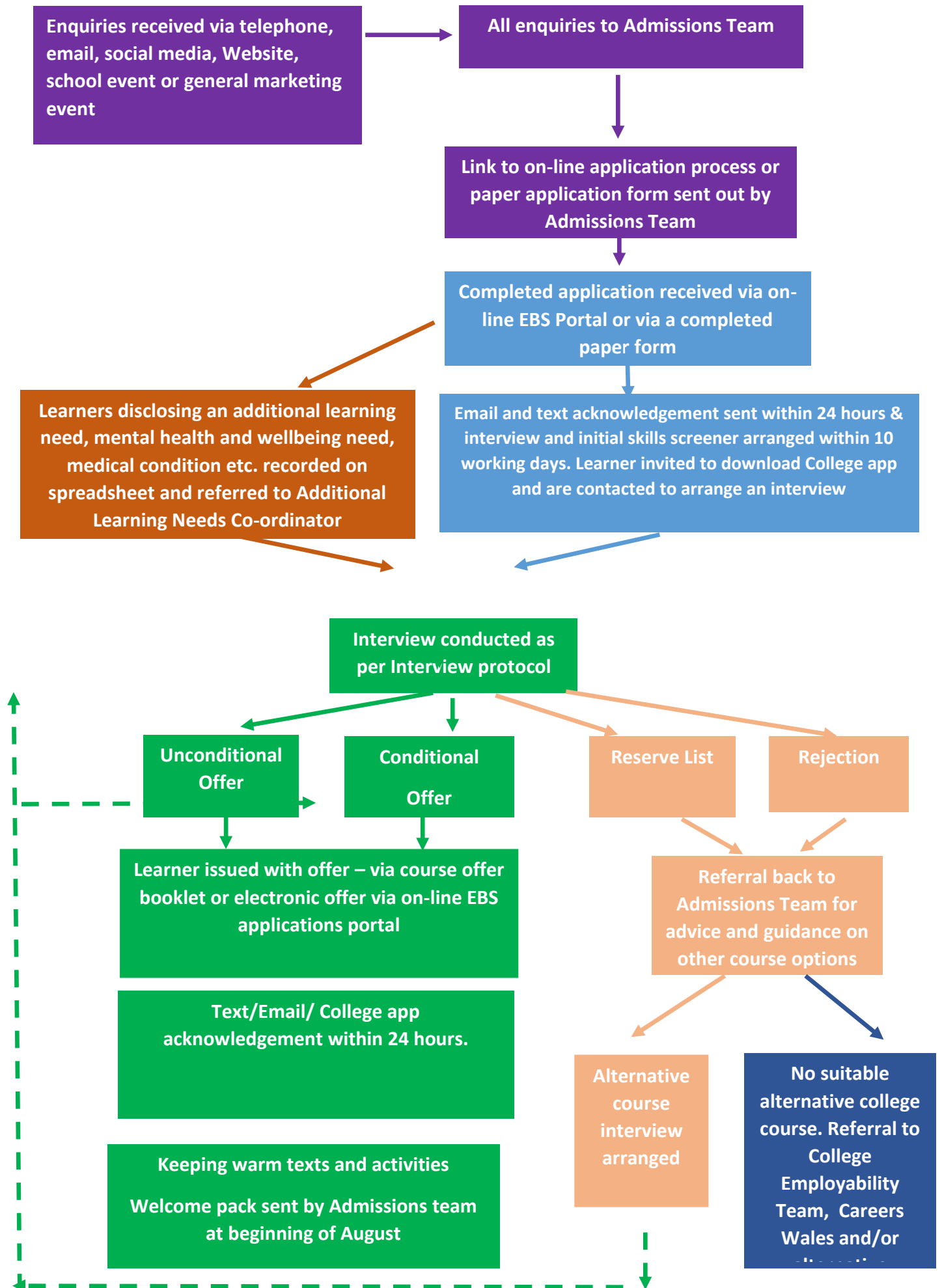
**Learner Support Admissions Officers will meet with course tutors and Heads of Divisions on a regular basis to monitor the application status for each course and ensure that the above procedures and timescales are being adhered to. All correspondence in relation to the above processes will be sent centrally by Admissions using standard bilingual letters and the progress tracked.**

**Step 9: Keeping in touch** – Learners who have accepted an offer to study at the college will be contacted on a regular basis by the Admissions team through:

- **Keeping in touch postcards, text messages and emails distributed throughout the year** – e.g. did you know that x amount of students progressed on to university from x course last year, good luck on your GCSE's etc.
- **Continual notifications and college news via the college app**
- **Invitations to attend college, subject based events and open evenings** e.g. Hairdressing applicants would be invited along to the college's Avant Grade Show.
- **Monthly college newsletters and updates** – distributed via email
- **Applicant meet and greet sessions for individual courses**

**Step 10: Enrolment and Induction Welcome Week** - In August prospective learners will be sent a 'Welcome to College' pack. This will include an outline of the plans for providing advice and guidance on GCSE Results Day through to the arrangements for enrolment and induction. The 'Welcome to College' pack also includes information regarding home to college travel, financial support and other learner support available to college learners.

**Figure 1: ADMISSIONS PROCESS – Direct enquiries and applications**



## ADMISSIONS PROCESS – Enquiries and applications via Open Evenings

Just registering an interest

Learner details registered  
Provide advice and guidance and pass learner details to Admissions team so that they can keep in touch with the learners and continue marketing the course to them.

Wishing to apply

Provide appropriate Advice and Guidance on the courses the learner is wishing to apply for.  
Provide link to on-line admissions system or paper admissions form

Interview conducted as per Interview protocol

Completed paper or on-line application submitted to Admissions Team

Rejection

Reserve list

Unconditional Offer

Conditional offer based on outcomes of follow up interview, initial skills screener or impending exams e.g. GCSEs

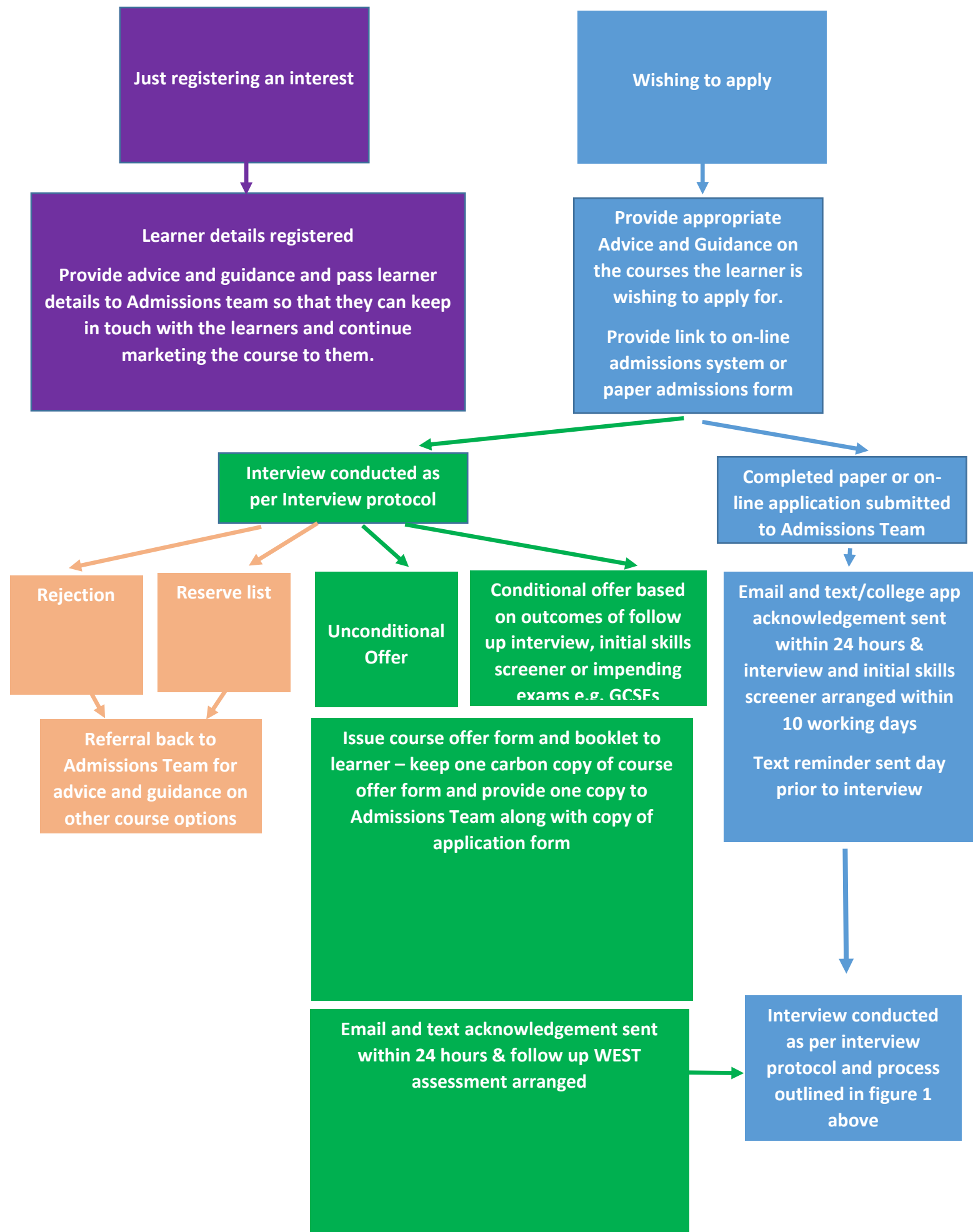
Email and text/college app acknowledgement sent within 24 hours & interview and initial skills screener arranged within 10 working days  
Text reminder sent day prior to interview

Referral back to Admissions Team for advice and guidance on other course options

Issue course offer form and booklet to learner – keep one carbon copy of course offer form and provide one copy to Admissions Team along with copy of application form

Email and text acknowledgement sent within 24 hours & follow up WEST assessment arranged

Interview conducted as per interview protocol and process outlined in figure 1 above



## APPENDIX TWO: ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES FOR PREPARATION FOR LIFE AND WORK LEARNERS

The procedures described in this section refer to prospective learners intending to join the Preparation for Life and Work courses at The College Merthyr Tydfil.

### *The start of the learner journey*

**Step 1: Promoting the college offer** - The college will publish an annual course guide and update its Website in September of each academic year. The college will also produce an ALN local Offer Booklet in conjunction with the local authority.

**Step 2: Initial enquiries** – The Admissions team and Heads of the Preparation for Life and Work division will attend regular transition meetings and events at the local Greenfield Special School. During these meetings, potential applicants and their parents/carers and support workers are provided with the opportunity to make initial enquires about courses and support on offer at the college.

Alternatively, enquiries may be made directly to the college in person, via email or by telephone.

**Step 3: Attending an Open Event** – The College Merthyr Tydfil holds five open events throughout the year to provide an opportunity for potential learners to find out about the courses on offer, meet subject staff and current learners, see the facilities on offer and learn all about the pastoral support and extra-curricular opportunities available at the college. Potential learners can register an interest or make an application as part of these open events.

**Step 4: Making an application** – Learners can apply directly to the college:

- On-line via the college website at: [www.merthyr.ac.uk](http://www.merthyr.ac.uk)
- Using the paper application form
- Through an open event as above.

On receipt of an application, the Admissions team will input the data into the college management information system and set up an individual applicant record.

**Step 5: Identifying the support needs of the learner** – Upon receipt of an application, the learner and their parent/carer or support worker will be sent an email acknowledgement message within 24 hours. This message will also ask for any further additional information regarding the support needs of the learner. The additional information provided will inform the interview process and therefore it is imperative that partner agencies work together and in a timely manner to ensure the application is not delayed.

**Step 6: Initial College Visit** – If they have not previously attended an open evening, the learner and their parent/carer or support worker will then be invited to attend an initial visit to the college. This will provide an opportunity for the learner and their parent/carer to view the facilities and support on offer. Visits will be arranged within seven working days of receipt of an application.

**Step 7: Interview and Initial Skills Screener** – All potential learners will then be invited to attend an interview with Admissions Officers and the ILS subject tutors. Interviews are conducted throughout the year, from November through to August/September. Interview dates will be arranged within 14 working days of receipt of an application. All learners attending an interview will be sent a text message reminder the day before the interview. All staff carrying out the interviews will follow the college's Interview Protocol and complete an Interview Record sheet (Appendix 4). As part of the interview, applicants will be asked to sit an initial skills screener assessment. This is used to further

determine the applicant's suitability for the course and to assess if support is required for literacy and numeracy.

**Step 8: The course offer** – Learners and their parents/carers or support workers will be notified of the outcomes of the interview within 24 hours by text and email and within seven working days by letter. This may be an unconditional offer of a place at college (for applicants who have already achieved their qualifications) or a conditional offer of a place at college. The offer letter will include a reply slip and reply email address to enable the learner to confirm acceptance of the place together with a Course Offer Form and Booklet. This Booklet provides important and useful information on enrolment and term dates, enrolment fees, scholarships and bursaries, additional learning needs and the college's welcome week.

If it is not deemed appropriate that a learner is offered a place on the programme they have applied for, the applicant will be offered further advice and guidance from Admissions /College Careers Adviser so that alternative progression routes at college can be considered. The Admissions team will then arrange further selection interviews as appropriate.

**Step 9: Keeping in touch** – Learners who have accepted an offer to study at the college will be contacted on a regular basis by the Admissions team through:

- **Keeping in touch postcards, text messages and emails distributed throughout the year**
- **Regular updates via the college app**
- **Invitations to attend college, subject based events and open evenings**
- **Monthly college newsletters and updates** – distributed via email
- **Applicant meet and greet sessions**

**Step 10: Enrolment and Induction Welcome Week** - In August prospective learners will be sent a 'Welcome to College' pack. This will include an invitation to come in to confirm their course and to complete the final stages of their enrolment process. The 'Welcome to College' pack also includes information regarding home to college travel, financial support and other learner support available to college learners.

## **APPENDIX THREE: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**

### **Overview**

The College Merthyr Tydfil seeks to ensure that the interview process is as engaging and supportive as possible, providing the prospective learner with the opportunity to outline his/her aspirations and reasons for choosing the course.

All interviews should be conducted by the Admissions team unless otherwise stipulated by subject area staff .e.g. where they feel that they need to speak in detail to the prospective learner about the subject specialism, i.e. Childcare. In these circumstances, a member of the Admissions Team will accompany the subject tutor.

The Interviewers will be required to ensure that prospective learners have the ability, appropriate qualifications, skills and enthusiasm to successfully complete their chosen course in order to achieve their maximum potential and progress on to further education or employment.

With this in mind, the interview should focus on the following criteria:

- **Reasons for choosing the course/subjects**
- **Level of interest/enthusiasm for the course**
- **Future ambitions**
- **Suitability for the course – current/pending qualifications, related work or voluntary experience**
- **Understanding of course requirements**
- **Likely commitment to the course, including an understanding of the costs of the course e.g. enrolment fee, uniform, art materials etc.**
- **Ability and willingness to engage in activities and opportunities to enhance their personal development**
- **Ability and willingness to contribute to general college life and extra-curricular opportunities**
- **Any mental health and wellbeing or additional learning needs declared by the learner**
- **The learner's fitness to study**
- **Outcomes of initial skills screener and identification of any additional literacy and numeracy support requirements**

Wherever possible, prospective learners should be informed of the interview decisions at the end of the interview.

**If the outcome is positive**, the learner should be provided with a course offer form and booklet.

This will be followed up with a congratulations text and email message within 24 hours and a formal offer letter within 7 working days.

**If the interview process determines that the course may not be the most appropriate for a learner**, the learner will be referred for further advice and guidance from the Admissions team and a referral form completed. Admissions will explore alternative options within the curriculum/subject areas, perhaps exploring provision at a lower level, or within another subject area. All referrals should be handled positively with the learner assured that a suitable progression plan will be discussed and identified with them. Alternative provision considering the learners best interests must always be sought.