

ST. DAVID'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE  
COLEG CATHOLIG DEWI SANT  
Admissions & Progression Policy

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# Mission Statement / Datganiad Cenhadaeth

The mission statement provides the basis of the College's admissions priorities.

"A Catholic college for the community, seeking to discover and realise the full potential of all in an atmosphere of love, service and respect inspired by Christ".

Consistent with the Catholic Church's social teaching, the college seeks to pursue a "preferential option for the poor". To be of service to the disadvantaged and marginalised particularly in terms of spiritual and material poverty is a key part of our mission as a Catholic institution. Such intent is articulated through our approach to marketing, liaison and recruitment. The diversity of our community is celebrated as enriching for all and is cherished and supported through our behaviours, culture and structure as a college.

## 1. Scope and Purpose

1.1 The College aims to meet the needs of the Catholic and wider community of Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. In this way, the college strives to recruit learners from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds as reflected in the demographic of the college's six partner schools. Three of the six Catholic partner schools, Mary Immaculate in Ely, Cardinal Newman in Pontypridd and St Illtyd's in Rumney, are located in areas of social deprivation represented by their inclusion in the Welsh Government's Communities First programme.

1.2 The College is committed to operating a fair and transparent admissions process which considers all applicants consistently and without prejudice on their individual merits. The principles of this policy will apply to all course applications and enquiries.

1.3 The College, in processing applications, will abide by its Equality and Diversity, Health & Safety, Careers Guidance, Duty of Care, Child Protection, UCAS, Fee, Student Disciplinary, Confidentiality and Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults policies.

1.4 The College is committed to the promotion of the Welsh Language and will endeavour to address and support the needs of Welsh Language speakers in accordance with the College's Welsh Language Scheme.

1.5 The College aims to offer appropriate course provision for all applicants; however, for some applicants, its courses or facilities would not be appropriate. In these instances, the College will refer applicants to Careers Wales or other supporting agencies for impartial guidance about other education and training opportunities.

1.6 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 Data Protection Policy. The Designated members of the senior leadership team will be the key contact for these agencies.

## **2. Management and Organisation**

2.1 The Senior Manager responsible for admissions is the Vice Principal: Quality Improvement and Student Journey.

2.2 Admissions Management Information Reports will be presented to the senior leadership team on a regular basis.

2.3 The Director of Admissions and Liaison will organise guidance sessions for all applicants.

2.4 All staff who are involved in conducting guidance sessions will be required to attend staff briefing sessions and will be provided with an admissions information and training prior to guidance sessions

2.5 Online Learning applications and admissions will be processed by the Director of Admissions and Liaison.

2.6 Applications from international students will be processed by the International Manager in line with the College's International Policy and the UK Border Agency requirements.

2.7 The College is unable to make an offer to study until 'Right to Study' checks have been undertaken. This includes a member of College staff checking relevant identity documents in the presence of an applicant and taking a copy to keep on record.

2.8 If an applicant has a visa, and this expires; it is a requirement that students provide a renewed and valid visa to the College.

## **3. Admissions Priorities**

As a designated Catholic College, St David's is required to give priority to Catholic applicants, although the College wishes to offer its services to students drawn from the wider community, who would benefit from our ethos.

The following criteria are used to discern priority in receiving an offer to study:

3.1 Students who are present and past pupils of our partner schools: Corpus Christi, Mary Immaculate, St Illtyd's, St Richard Gwyn, Cardinal Newman and St Albans.

3.2 Catholic students from other schools within Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

3.3 Other Catholic students within the region whose needs cannot be met within their local Catholic post 16 provision or who are moving into the area.

3.4 Students who have special educational needs for which the College is perceived or likely to be the best provider.

3.5 Students from 11-16 provision within the region who look to the College for the opportunity to develop the religious and spiritual dimensions of their lives.

3.6 Students from other Christian denominations and other major world faiths who look to the College for the opportunity to develop the religious and spiritual dimensions of their lives.

3.7 Students whose presence in the College will contribute to the community or assist in making curriculum provision viable.

3.8 Other students who look to the College for the opportunity to develop the religious and spiritual dimensions of their lives.

## **4. General Principles**

4.1 The Director of Admissions will invite all applicants for full-time programmes for a College Guidance Session.

4.2 To ensure that the admissions process is clear and followed fairly and consistently, transparent entry requirements will be used to underpin judgements relating to a decision to admit. The current entry criteria can be found in Appendix 1. Entry criteria will be reviewed annually by the senior leadership team. This includes, where appropriate, applicant age, applicant qualifications on entry and aptitude for study.

4.3 A failure to declare information or provide incorrect information on an application form may result in an offer being withdrawn.

4.4 All applicants will be invited to attend a guidance session after which they may be made an offer dependent upon the applicant meeting the level and course entry criteria.

4.5 Confirmation of conditional offers will be made in August of each year post-GCSE results during the enrolment process.

4.6 Applicants who meet their offer requirements will be invited to a College enrolment session.

4.7 Applicants who do not meet their offer requirements will be referred to Careers Wales or other supporting agencies for impartial guidance about other education and training opportunities where a suitable alternative programme of study cannot be offered by the College.

4.8 Applicants will be required to declare a diagnosed educational or medical need. Where the applicant declares an educational or medical need the application will be forwarded to the Learning Support Team for consideration. Where applicants do not declare a diagnosed educational or medical need the College cannot ensure that support will be available.

4.9 Applicants already studying at the College and who wish to progress onto another course are required to complete a College application process which will be subject to the above screening process. Priority will be given to new students of the College.

4.10 If the College is unable to make an offer of a place, the applicant will be referred to Careers Wales or other supporting agencies for impartial guidance about other education and training opportunities.

4.11 Learners who apply to the College without any GCSE (or equivalent) qualifications will initially be considered for a place to study at Level 1; their suitability for a higher level of study will be assessed during the initial weeks of the academic year. If it is appropriate and there is availability on the alternative course, learners may be offered the opportunity to move courses in order to study at a higher level (Level 2 or 3).

## **5. Applicants with a Disclosure**

5.1 In compliance with College Safeguarding and Duty of Care arrangements, applicants are required to disclose details of any charges pending, criminal convictions, cautions, reprimands, final warnings and bind-over orders on application to the College. Any applicant who has answered yes to the question regarding criminal convictions or charges pending will be sent a Disclosure Form for return to the admissions team.

5.2 The College operates an Equality and Diversity Policy and therefore having a disclosure or being previously excluded, will not necessarily exempt a person from joining a course. However, this will depend upon the nature of the course of application and the circumstances.

## **6. Appeal**

6.1 Any student initially refused a place will be notified in writing of their right to appeal against a decision in relation to their application for admission to the College.

6.2 Appeals should be made in writing to the College Principal within fifteen working days of the date that the decision was confirmed by the College and should set out the specific grounds on which the appeal is made.

6.3 Appeals will be considered by the Principal, who will take into account the comparable merits of appeals made by other applicants. The outcome of the appeal will be confirmed to the applicant in writing.

## **7. Progression to the Upper Sixth / Year 2 of the College**

7.1 For AS Level learners to progress to the second year of the A Level course (sometimes referred to as the A2), a minimum of a Grade D is required at AS Level. The only exception to this is a Grade C is required for progression onto A Level Further Maths.

7.2 For vocational learners to progress to the second year of their course, all Lower Sixth units need to be completed, at a minimum of a Pass or Near Pass grade.

7.3 Learners who do not pass the equivalent of 3 AS/A Level courses will be required to pick up new course(s). The options available to learners will be subject to availability after new students of the College have enrolled and entry requirements being met.

7.4 Change of courses in the Upper Sixth will be subject to availability, after new learners and learners who need to pick up a new course to remain a full time learner have been enrolled; entry requirements must be met.

## **8. Progression from Level 1 to Level 2**

8.1 For Level 1 learners to progress to a Level 2 programme of study at the College, a pass must be achieved in the main Level 1 course by the point of enrolment on to the Level 2 course.

8.2 Level 1 learners must apply for a place to study at Level 2; progression is not automatic. Applications will be reviewed and learners invited to an interview to discuss their application. Learners' record of studentship, attendance and attainment will be considered.

## **9. Progression from Level 2 to Level 3**

9.1 For Level 2 learners to progress to a Level 3 programme of study at the College, a pass (or above, if relevant) must be achieved in the main Level 2 course.

9.2 Level 2 learners must apply for a place to study at Level 3; progression is not automatic. Applications will be reviewed and learners may be invited to an interview to discuss their applications. A learner's record of studentship, attendance and attainment will be considered.

9.3 Level 3 entry requirements must be met from a combination of previous St David's Catholic College qualifications (such as the Level 2 course completed) and any qualifications at Grade C (or equivalent) or above at a previous institution(s). Students who have demonstrated particular academic aptitude in a course area may be considered for a place on a Level 3 course where entry requirements have been met; this is subject to recommendation from the subject staff.

## **10. Additional Year of Study**

10.1 It is assumed that learners in an Upper Sixth Tutor Group will progress from College at the end of their Upper Sixth academic year; if learners wish to remain at College for an additional year (formerly known as the RASMA programme), they must submit an application. Applications will be reviewed and learners invited to an interview to discuss their applications.

10.2 A learner's record of studentship, attendance and attainment will be considered during the application process for an additional year of study, as well as the reason(s) behind their request.

10.3 Learners must be remaining at College for an additional year due to one of the following reasons:

10.3.a To complete courses to gain the full A-Level (or equivalent) qualification so they are able to achieve their ambition(s) for the future.

10.3.b To study a new course(s) to achieve their ambitions for the future.

10.3.c. Due to extenuating circumstances that have impacted their studies at College.

10.3 All learners remaining at College for an additional year of study are expected to maintain an excellent record of attendance and studentship (including completion of all homework and assessments); failure to do so may lead to their place at the College being revoked. Learners remaining at College for an additional year may be asked to sign a contract of commitment with stated review dates.

10.4 All learners remaining at College for an additional year will be expected to engage in review meetings to ensure that they are upholding expectations with regard to studentship and attendance. If required, learners will be placed on a contract of commitment to address any concerns and failure to improve may lead to their place at the College being revoked.

10.5 Learners remaining at St David's for an additional year are expected to engage with the support offered by the College if they experience any barriers to their learning.

10.6 A place on any new course(s) is subject to availability following the enrolment of new students of the College and entry requirements being met.

10.7 Learners remaining at College for an additional year must study a minimum of 2 AS/A Level equivalent curriculum courses, not including the Advanced Skills Baccalaureate Wales (formerly known as the Welsh Baccalaureate).

## **Appendix 1**

### **Entry Criteria for All Programmes**

11. Applicants must not be older than 19 years of age on entry to the College. This is in order to maintain the sixth form ethos of the College.

12. To be enrolled on Level 3 programmes, applicants must meet the following entry criteria:

a) Learners with at least six GCSEs at Grade C or above will study 3 AS Level courses. Students with a mixture of As and Bs at GCSE will be considered for studying 4 AS Level courses. Individual Level 3 courses have their own entry criteria; the individual course criteria are published on the College website.

b) Learners with the equivalent of 5 GCSE passes in vocational Level 2 courses can study Level 3 vocational courses only.

13. To be enrolled on a Level 2 course, applicants will meet the following entry criteria:

a) Learners aged sixteen at the start of the academic year, with a GCSE grade profile of 4 GCSE at grade D or above will study a Level 2 vocational course with the option to re-sit Maths or English at GCSE if needed. Students who have less than 4 grade Ds at GCSE may be offered a Level 1 pathway.

b) Learners will not generally be considered for admission to a second year of study at Level 2 in the College unless there are extenuating circumstances for the learner, which meant they were unable to progress to Level 3 within the College. This is that learners aged seventeen or over at the beginning of the academic year will not be offered an opportunity for study at Level 2.

14. Applicants in interview must demonstrate an aptitude to work hard and show they would benefit from the College's Catholic mission. An applicant's attitude and behaviour (both during the interview and in general) will also be considered.