

WESTMINSTER ADULT EDUCATION SERVICE

ADMISSIONS POLICY 2023-24

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1. Purpose and Scope

Purpose

The role of the WAES Admissions Service is to ensure we serve Westminster residents and London learners by administering a fair and transparent access to the learning programmes we offer. We pride ourselves on being committed to serving a diverse range of learners from a breadth of local, national and international backgrounds. WAES is committed to working with adults from a variety of different educational starting points whose aims vary from wanting to be part of their community to transforming their lives through career aspirations.

With this backdrop, WAES takes care and pride in delivering a fair, open, transparent and impartial Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance. This is based on the WAES Entry Criteria Framework.

It is vital that all learners understand the reason they are engaging in study, either as a part of their exploration of cultural life and their wellbeing or their ambition to change their economic status through studying towards qualifications.

It is equally important to ensure that every learner is assessed to ensure that they are able to engage in the study area they are enrolling on fully and to ensure that every learner is supported in their studies.

The WAES Admissions Policy places these principals at the start of a learner's journey by assigning the most suitable route.

Scope

This policy applies to all learners.

2.Objectives

The objectives underpinning the Admissions policy are as follows:

- 2.1 To ensure that all applicants are informed of all admissions criteria and that they are treated fairly and equitably within those criteria.
- 2.2 To ensure that all applications are considered on an equal basis and that prior academic study, potential for study and relevant technical or creative experience and aptitude is taken into account.
- 2.3 To ensure that every applicant completes an Initial Assessment, if they do not have qualifications on entry or the qualifications they hold are over 5 years old.
- 2.4 To assign each learner to a career-focused plan or a personal development focused plan and ensure that every learner is provided with clear advice and guidance and a route to success.
- 2.5 To ensure that these plans have a clear outcomes and goals for learners to achieve. This will be recorded in the Individual Learner Record (ILR).
- 2.6 To ensure that every learner is given the right level of support to achieve their personal and study goals.

2.7 Prior attainment will be taken into consideration on a case by case basis for all programmes and will be used in decision making.

3. Definitions/Abbreviations

WAES	Westminster Adult Education Service
ILR	Individual Learner Record
CEIAG	Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
WCC	Westminster City Council
EB	Executive Board
LEO	Learner Experience Officer (member of the Admissions Team)
LDO	Learner Development Officer (provides advice and guidance and administers assessments)
IA	Initial Assessment
EBS	The database system in use by WAES where all learner information is stored
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

4. Admissions Process

There is a difference between the application process for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) learners, those applying to other vocational courses and for unaccredited course applicants.

General Application Process:

- **Step 1:** application stage, which includes the registration of personal data on the WAES portal, or manual creation of a learner profile by an LEO.
- **Step 2:** check applicants' qualifications & inviting them to attend initial assessments, if required.
- **Step 3:** initial assessments (English/Maths/ICT/GCSE/ other as determined by specific curriculum area).
- **Step 4:** welfare assessment, welfare support, criminal convictions and learning support needs. Outcome communicated to the applicant with a discussion about course selection (CEIAG). Decisions on criminal convictions and enrolment will be made by a senior member of staff based on the evidence presented along with a risk assessment.
- **Step 5:** interview with curriculum staff to ensure that the course selected is right for the learner.
- **Step 6:** interview submitted on EBS & application progress code updated to (un)conditional offer.
- **Step 7:** fee assessment & course fees (if applicable) outlined.

- **Step 8:** enrolment, Learning Agreement with course dates provided & signed, ID badge printed. ID badge must show a clear facial photograph.

ESOL Application Process:

- **Step 1:** application and recording of basic learner information on the system.
- **Step 2:** applicant completes a written ESOL assessment.
- **Step 3:** discussion with ESOL team to establish correct course level & discuss available options (days/times/locations).
- **Step 4:** discussion with the welfare & support team about additional support needs.
- **Step 5:** fee assessment & course fees (if applicable) outlined.
- **Step 6:** enrolment, Learning Agreement with course dates provided & signed, ID badge printed.

Unaccredited Course Enrolment Process:

- **Step 1:** Learner completes their enrolment and payment online (if there is an issue with payment, this can also be completed at any WAES centre or by phone).
- **Step 2:** Learner attends their class and receives their ID badge once they visit a WAES centre.

5. Criteria for Admissions

- The applicant needs to meet the specific entry requirements of a programme or course. WAES will also provide information and assistance to enable learners to enrol on the programme best suited to their ability and their desired outcomes, where possible.
- Learners are responsible for providing WAES with all relevant information regarding previous study and knowledge gained and WAES will conduct additional pre-entry assessment and interviews to ensure that learners meet the entry requirements for the course they wish to enrol on – entry requirements are set in line with those determined by the relevant awarding organisation.
- Where a learner does not meet the necessary entry requirements for a course, WAES will endeavour to offer alternative study opportunities to the learner, where possible.
- In a case where an applicant is unable to enrol due to academic, wellbeing or language barriers, Community and Cultural Learning provision may be more applicable.
- WAES cannot guarantee the availability of any course and has the right to cancel a course if this becomes necessary due to changes in staffing, funding or for any other reasonable cause. If a learner has paid for a course which is subsequently cancelled, any payments will be refunded to the learner.
- Offers of places on courses are made on the basis of there being sufficient demand for the course and there being sufficient spaces available on the course.
- Should a learner require a childcare placement before committing to a course enrolment, they are required to contact the Childcare Manager, for guidance – please refer to Bursary Policy
- Where a place is offered on an apprenticeship programme the learner will need to meet the entry criteria and the offer of a place is further based on appropriate employment being secured to meet the relevant apprenticeship standard.

- A number of courses require an Enhanced DBS as the course will include a placement working with vulnerable adults or children. In these cases, admission to the course may be dependent on welfare assessment and the DBS clearance being attained.
- Where a learner is found to have falsified any information provided to WAES, the enrolment offer will be withdrawn, and the Service reserves the right to not accept future applications from this learner.
- Prospective learners should be 19-years old as of the 31st of August 2023, however, there may be cases where a learner younger than 19 can be accepted. These applications will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- Applications to the Diversity & Inclusion programme will be subject to an assessment to ensure learners meet the criteria of the Diversity & Inclusion Framework and priority will be given to learners residing in Westminster. (Appendix A)

6. Right to Refuse Enrolment

- WAES reserves the right to refuse an offer to an applicant who:
 - Does not meet the entry requirements set for the course programme.
 - Withholds information or provides false and/or misleading information.
 - Has unspent convictions, which have been risk assessed, through Safeguarding and WAES is unable to mitigate any identified risks. This may also apply to situations where a safeguarding concern has been raised.
 - Has previously been excluded from WAES or another learning provider.
 - Has previously enrolled at WAES or another training provider and not completed their courses, including assessments.
 - Has enrolled on one or more previous vocational study programmes (whether completed or not), either with WAES or another provider. In these cases, a full evaluation will be conducted, and the outcome will be decided by the Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality on a case-by-case basis.
 - Has outstanding debts to WAES.
 - Where WAES is unable to make reasonable and proportionate adjustments in order to accommodate disabilities or additional requirements – see also Fitness to Study Policy.
 - Has applied after the course has started. Depending on the number of classes missed, the Head of Curriculum Area will determine whether the learner can enrol late on a case-by-case basis.

7. Appeals

An appeal is a formal request for a selection decision to be reviewed and will only be considered where there are adequate grounds (as set out below). An applicant can request a

review of a decision concerning the application with regards to procedural grounds, within **two weeks** of the decision being made.

Any applicant may appeal against the handling of their admissions decision if there is a reason to believe that:

- The admission decision contradicts the published entry criteria.
- An administration or procedural error has occurred in handling the application.
- There are concerns regarding staff behaviour in handling the admission application.

Appeals will not be considered in the event that:

- Information has emerged which may have affected the decision, and which was not provided at the time of the original decision.
- The applicant is disappointed with the selection decision made on academic grounds.
- The dispute concerns a decision from a previous admissions cycle or one that has already been accepted by the applicant.

Learners who wish to appeal against any decision made during the admissions and enrolment process should email complaints@waes.ac.uk in the first instance.

8. Non-home Learners

- Non-home learners are learners who do not pass the initial residency and eligibility checks of the applicable funding agency for the course on which they wish to enrol, and are therefore deemed to be ineligible for funding.
- Non-home learners are charged the full cost of their learning programme.
- All applicants are required to prove that they have permission to live and study in the UK, for at least the duration of their course, at the time of enrolment.
- WAES is not a licensed sponsor and is not in a position to sponsor learners for the purposes of study.

9. Responsibilities

9.1 Learners

It is the responsibility of all learners to:

- Inform WAES of their learning goals and aspirations.
- Provide WAES with all relevant information regarding previous study and career progression.
- Provide WAES with all required personal information that will have a bearing on their eligibility for funding.

- Inform WAES of any changes to their personal details, including address, phone number and email address.
- Inform WAES of any changes in circumstances that may influence their goals and aspirations.
- Complete an initial assessment and undergo an interview with curriculum staff to ensure that they are given correct advice and guidance.
- Inform WAES of any additional learning needs to support they may require whilst on programme.
- The learner will need to provide documentation:
 - ID – for example, UK, EU or EEA passport or UK-born driving license.
 - Where applicable, proof of visa or (pre-)settled status – for example, Home Office letter, gov.uk screenshot of status, biometric residence permit or application registration card.
 - Where applicable, proof of benefits – for example, benefits letter or bank statement showing a payment dated within the last 3 months, in the learner's name.
 - Where applicable, proof of low income – for example, payslips dated within the last 3 months or latest tax return, in the learner's name.
 - Prior learning information – For example certificates, MIAP, etc.

9.2 Learner Development and Careers Teams' Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all Learner Development, Learning Support and Careers Development Officers to:

- Ensure learners have been given careers information, advice and guidance related to their application and other study options as required.
- Ensure that learners are made aware of all additional support available to them.
- Advice related to financial support, through the Learner Bursary.
- Administer thorough pre-course assessment and ensure that learners are interviewed prior to enrolment.
- Assess the learner's support needs and discuss any wellbeing requirements.

9.3 Learner Experience Officers' Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all Learner Experience Officers to:

- Check all information provided by learners and ensure that all documentation is recorded on EBS.
- Ensure that all information is entered correctly in the system.
- Provide pre-course funding advice and information, including information regarding advanced learner loans.
- Apply the correct waiver codes so that appropriate funding is applied to their record.
- Ensure that all information required for the ILR return is correctly entered into the system.

- Provide every learner with a learning agreement, ID badge and the date and time of their first class.

9.4 Admissions Manager's Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of management:

- To ensure staffing levels are adequate to provide the best possible service to learners and the Service.
- To ensure that data is entered correctly and that errors are identified, monitored corrected in a timely manner.
- To ensure that staff are supporting learners and providing excellent service.
- To ensure that the Service is informed of arrangements for interviews and enrolment periods.
- To ensure that the Admissions team support Curriculum staff to achieve enrolment targets.

9.5 Curriculum Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Service's Curriculum staff:

- To ensure that the Admissions Team are fully informed of changes to the curriculum.
- To ensure that the team are supported with interview times, and these are clearly communicated.
- To ensure that entry requirements are correct, and that changes and additions have been circulated.
- To supply information regarding progressions in a reasonable timeframe so that the Admissions Team have adequate time available to implement.
- To ensure that external and paper enrolments are supplied to the Admissions Team in a timely manner.
- To utilise the team's helpdesk to request tasks from the team.

Note: All staff must pay attention to the age of young learners. Anyone who is aged 16-18 on 31 August **must be referred to the Head of Learner Development or one of the Assistant Principals**. For learners aged 16-18, in addition to all the fields on the enrolment form we must also record their GCSE results for English and Maths. Learners in receipt of Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) **must be referred to the Diversity and Inclusion Co-ordinator**.

10. Associated Documentation/Linked Policies/Procedures

- WAES entry criteria as developed by the curriculum team
- Learner Fees Policy
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Compliments & Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Safeguarding Policy
- Fitness to Study Policy and Procedures
- Learner Bursary (Formerly DLSF-Discretionary Learner Support Fund)
- Childcare Admissions Policy

11. Access to the Policy

The policy will be published on the WAES SharePoint Intranet and the WAES website.

12. Monitoring and Review

The Admissions Manager will review this document annually. The operation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by looking at enrolment numbers, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion information and numbers of complaints received. Feedback from learners and staff will be incorporated and numbers of errors and data quality will be taken into account.

Equality Impact Assessment / Safeguarding Considerations

Westminster Adult Education Service is committed to the promotion of equality, diversity and providing a supportive environment for all members of our community. Our commitment means that this policy has been reviewed to ensure that it does not discriminate (either intentionally or unintentionally) any of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender (including gender identity), race, religion or sexual orientation and meets our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Name of Policy/Procedure	Admissions Policy
1 If Equality Impact Analysis is not relevant to this function, give reasons and proceed to section 5.	
2 In what ways could this function have a negative impact on any of the groups above? What actions have been taken to eliminate these?	There could be capability issues and we may need to help learners to follow all the steps in this procedure. We will explore all options available to us to support all users in their application and enrolment process and ensure that reasonable adjustments to the procedure are made if required, for instance, providing information in alternative formats and assisting non-English speakers.
3 In what ways could this function have a positive impact on any of the groups above? How will this function be used to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups? Are there plans for the future that will further advance equality?	This policy aims to be clear and open and to demonstrate a standard and inclusive process.
4 What evidence supports your judgement eg. Observations, Consultations, expert opinions, quantitative or qualitative surveys. If the evidence is in the form of additional documentation where is this stored?	Enrolment reports that include Equality, Diversity and Inclusion information.
5 Has this function taken into account and cross-referenced where appropriate to Safeguarding policy and procedures? Give Details.	GDPR regulations have been considered and we ensure that we comply with data protection requirements. Staff are supported and trained to treat all learners with dignity and respect.
POLICY OWNER Signed: Date:	Sultan Khan 05/09/2023

Version Control Information

Version	Date	Revision Author	Summary of Changes
V2	10 October 2022	Edelweiss Arnold	Updated processes and procedures.
V3	14 February 2023	Edelweiss Arnold	Updated process information and changed some wording.
V4	05 September 2023	Sultan Khan	Updated process information and changed some wording.



WESTMINSTER ADULT EDUCATION SERVICE

Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2023-24

The new diversity and inclusion framework is to provide every learner an Employability and Independent Living pathway that will enable all learners to achieve their aspirations and fulfil their potential within 3 years.

There will be a selection of programmes that support personal and social development needs that run alongside the year long programme and run independently.

Based on initial assessment all learners will be offered an initial 3-year offer. Some learners will be placed on a dedicated year long pathway which involves a primary focus with other supporting classes. Other learners will be provided with programmes that meet their aspirations and assessed needs. These will be a maximum of three courses each term to accommodate all learners.

Employability Pathway

- Foundations stage 1, 2, 3
- Entry Levels Maths and English- (Combined)
- Enterprise and Employability
- Volunteering and Work Experience

Independent Living Pathway

- Exploring out and about
- Independent skills improve your cooking skills.

We will have a small offer for those that have profound and multiple learning needs.

All classes 100% face to face but digital skills will be developed as part of the course offering.

As part of Westminster City Council, we will be offering places to Westminster residents as a priority group.

As a phased approach to this new framework we will be implementing this and reviewing learners that have studied 10 years or more with WAES living outside Westminster.