




NORTH EAST
SCOTLAND
COLLEGE



Procedure 199: **STUDENT ADMISSION & INTERVIEW PROCEDURE**

1. Introduction

This document sets out the standard College procedure for the admission of full-time students, short full-time students where entry requirements are assessed, and in time other part-time courses. College programmes exempt from these procedures include Schools provision, commercial courses, community courses and open learning programmes.

This procedure aims to be both applicant-focused and applicant-friendly. It is essential that the admissions and interview procedure results in the placing of students on the most appropriate course for their abilities, needs and aspirations. Fundamentally, this procedure aims to ensure equality of access and opportunity for all applicants and that the admissions process is free from bias. In maintaining such approaches the College seeks to ensure a positive and successful experience for all prospective students.

2. The Admissions Procedure

The following points give a brief description of the standard procedure to be followed for College admissions. Whilst this procedure seeks to ensure consistency in approach for all applicants applying for College courses certain aspects of this procedure may be modified to meet the individual requirements of College curriculum teams. **Any changes to this procedure must first be discussed with the Head of Faculty and then sanctioned by the relevant Director of Learning or Director of Business Development.**

2.1 Applications

- 2.1.1** Applications, except for those courses mentioned above, are made through an online portal on the College website. Those considering applying to College will be directed to the portal to complete an online application. To ensure accessibility the form is available in different formats from our Student Advice Centres, and can also be downloaded from **the College website**. Support for the applicant can be arranged by contacting the Student Advice Centre (SAC) at **studentadvice@nescol.ac.uk** or attending an advertised application session. These sessions will be offered regularly. All applications will be processed and managed through the Student Application Management (SAM) system. Applicants can track the progress of their application and be notified of any action required by logging in to their online application account.
- 2.1.2** **Applications will be open to all from November onwards. Applicants can only have one 'live' application at a time. Progressing students will be encouraged to apply by an agreed date, nominally set at 31 January to ensure the offer of a place on the most suitable course is available to them.** Students enrolled on year 1 of an HND course will have an application processed on their behalf for year 2 of the relevant HND course.
- 2.1.3** To ensure that enrolment targets are met, each course should have an agreed offer target which exceeds the enrolment target. For most courses the target will be 120%, although in areas where resources limit numbers an excess can be negotiated between the relevant Curriculum Manager and Head of Faculty/Manager.

- 2.1.4** An applicant will receive an automated message within 24 hours confirming receipt of their completed application. In addition, an applicant will receive information on what will happen next and by when. Where a paper application form has been submitted, a confirmation of receipt will be sent within 5 working days. Information on activities that applicants will be expected to view and take part in will be sent monthly by email and shared on social media platforms.
- 2.1.5** Applicants with care-experienced backgrounds or those from SIMD 10 postcode areas will be guaranteed a place at College, where places are still available or an alternative offered (e.g., referral to SDS) if places are no longer available, and the offer of pre-entry and on-course support measures. If further support is required, or a discussion to explore options outwith College then the applicant should be referred to the Student Advice and Support Team. Further referral to SDS by SA&ST may be a suitable outcome. Other special groups of interest may be added to this guarantee as appropriate. Focus on specific groups can be required in our Outcome Agreement or our Equality Outcomes.
- 2.1.6** Courses will be considered as 'high demand' where all available places are allocated. Heads of Faculty must seek approval from their Director of Learning before advising the Student Information Officer when a course moves to high demand and whether further applications can be accepted. Should anyone apply for a course after it is marked as 'high demand', SAC staff will offer to advise such applicants of places available on other courses or make a referral to SDS. Should places on high demand courses become available later, applicants will be contacted to progress their application. When the course is closed curriculum staff must update the status of applicants from High Demand Letter Sent to Course Full.
- 2.1.7** If an applicant is not a UK National or has not lived in Scotland all their lives, then further information will be requested from the applicant during the application process. Once the application is submitted it will be reviewed by the Student Admissions and Funding Team. The first step is to assess the applicant for residency status and advise them if any course fees are payable. If the applicant is assessed as being an international student then their qualifications held and/or pending will be reviewed to ensure they meet Visa requirements. Additionally, the applicant may be asked to sit an English language test which may incur a charge. If the applicant is assessed as being home fees status their qualifications will be reviewed only if required to establish if entry requirements have been met and to make a full or conditional offer, or on the request of the Curriculum Manager or member of staff considering the application by sending an email to enquiry@nescol.ac.uk giving the details of the applicant/s. If the applicant has still to upload copies of their certificates they should be asked to upload them to documents@nescol.ac.uk. The Student Admissions & Funding team will assess the documents and confirm the comparable SCQF level.
- 2.1.8** If the applicant is an exceptional entrant i.e. will not have reached official school leaving age at the course start date, the College Administration will contact the relevant school asking for application approval, or where the applicant is home schooled then the Local Authority is contacted. The application cannot be processed until the school has confirmed its approval.

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- 2.1.9** If the applicant has an unspent conviction they will be asked to provide details to the Student Advice and Support Team. This is to ensure safeguarding of the applicant, staff and other students.
- 2.1.10** The College Student Admissions & Funding team will check for any financial alerts held against applicants. Should any applicant debt be outstanding to the College the application will be withdrawn, until the debt has been repaid or a payment plan agreed. This particular process will be managed by the staff from the Student Advice Centre and Credit Control Team.
- 2.1.11** Applicants who declare an additional learning and/or support need or who are care-experienced will be advised of the services of the Student Advice and Support Team and informed on how to make an appointment should one be required. This will ensure that applicants are aware of, and encouraged to access – if required, support services prior to interview.
- 2.1.12** The Student Advice and Support Team will provide young people who are care-experienced with the opportunity to discuss any additional needs they may have.
- 2.1.13** A shortened selection process is usually adopted for progressing students and may not include an interview. Some curriculum areas, however, may choose to interview such students to support their progression.

2.2 Next steps

- 2.2.1** For applications on courses agreed between the Curriculum Manager and Student Information Officer the entry requirements and any other mandatory conditions set by the curriculum team will be reviewed by the Student Admissions & Funding team. If the requirements and conditions have been met, the Student Admissions & Funding team will make a full offer to the applicant. Where the entry criteria have not yet been reached but the applicant is working towards it, then a conditional offer will be made by the Student Admissions & Funding team. Where the criteria has not been met, and is not being worked towards then the application will be managed by the curriculum team. The Student Admissions & Funding team will make an offer or refer the application to the curriculum team within 2 weeks of the application being submitted. A work flow plan is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.2.2** For applications to other courses the Curriculum team will review the application. The applicant will be advised if any additional evidence or pieces of work are required along with details of how to submit this, or they may be sent an invitation to book an interview slot. Contact should be made with the applicant within 6 weeks of the application being submitted.
- 2.2.3** The Curriculum Manager will, by mid-December at the latest, advise the College Administration and Examinations Manager of planned interview dates taking place. Interviews should be available for booking as early as possible and within 6 weeks (about 1 and a half months) of the application submission date. Applicants will, be invited to book an interview only when SAM is updated to indicate this.

- 2.2.4** The Curriculum Manager will appoint interviewers from the relevant curriculum team. All interviewers must be fully conversant with the admissions and interview process, guidelines and scorecard approach for selection.
- 2.2.5** The following interview guidelines and the completion of the scorecard are critical elements for ensuring that the right applicants are placed on the right courses. Accordingly, these requirements must be adhered to for all applicant interviews. Curriculum Managers must, prior to interviews commencing, agree any required or suggested amendments to the scorecard with their Head of Faculty.
- 2.2.6** Scorecards will be used to assist the selection of suitable applicants for available courses. Scorecards can be customised by Curriculum Managers. To determine the criteria for offer (conditional or unconditional) the Curriculum Manager and Head of Faculty will set a minimum score for all, or parts of (pre-selection), the scoring process. If an applicant fails to reach the minimum criteria then an alternative course should be recommended.
- 2.2.7** The scorecard should prompt the member of staff to ask relevant questions of the applicant, to discuss their personal situation, previous experience of study and identify any potential barriers to their learning. Where an applicant has applied for a course that is either at a higher or lower level than their current abilities or qualifications, the interviewer may offer to interview the applicant and score them for the more appropriate level of course. Where a need for support is encountered then the applicant should be referred to the Student Advice Centre teams.
- 2.2.8** Curriculum Managers are responsible for ensuring rooms are booked for the group and individual interviews, where required or for inviting the applicants to a virtual meeting. Curriculum teams are responsible for informing College Reception staff as to where and when interviews will take place. Curriculum staff must meet applicants at Reception where interviews are to take place on Campus.
- 2.2.9** If an applicant fails to attend an interview and has not notified the College that their time and date is unsuitable, the Curriculum Manager will send a further invitation to book on to another interview/information session using the status 2nd interview Invitation Sent. If the applicant fails to attend this subsequent interview then the application should be withdrawn and the applicant will be sent a notification.

2.3 Offers

2.3.1 Where the entry requirements and any criteria agreed by the curriculum team are already held by the applicant then the Student Admissions & Funding team will make a full offer: where any of the entry requirements and criteria are pending then the Student Admissions & Funding team will make a conditional offer.

2.3.2 The outcome for each applicant must be shown on SAM as either:

- **Full (unconditional) offer made**
- **Conditional offer made with details of conditions to be met, i.e. successful completion of pending examinations.**

Please note if the condition/s is/are copied into the 'notes' section on SAM this can be viewed in the summary, removing the need to click on the 'make conditional offer' link every time.

Unsuccessful. Should this particular outcome occur the applicant's scorecard must clearly indicate the reason(s) why the candidate has not been offered a place on the course applied for. The Curriculum team will recommend an alternative course to the unsuccessful applicant, and where the applicant wishes to consider the new course, the application should be transferred within SAM. This means that the applicant is not required to complete another application. If the applicant decides not to take up the new course they should be referred to the Student Advice Centre. (Please note that where an application is transferred the information on Additional Support Needs (ASN), or information provided by international students or parental or school approval is not transferred automatically so will not appear against the transferred application straightaway).

2.3.3 The Curriculum Manager will update SAM with the agreed offers to be made. Applicants will then be notified of the outcome of their interview automatically by email for online applications or by the College's Student Admissions & Funding Team sending a letter if a paper application.

Offers must be communicated to applicants within 10 days (about 1 and a half weeks) of an interview being held.

2.3.4 The Director of Learning and the Head of Faculty will monitor offers made against target on a regular basis to ensure that unmet demand is minimised and that all places are filled. The Head of Faculty must advise the Student Information Officer when any course is to be placed on 'High Demand' and whether further applications can be accepted, or if the course should be flagged as 'Course Full'.

2.3.5 An applicant's acceptance of an offer made (full or conditional) should be confirmed within 10 working days from the date of offer, otherwise the offer may be withdrawn. Where the offer is conditional the precise details of the conditions to be met must be set out in the offer. Applicants will also be advised of who to contact to provide evidence of conditions having been met. Acceptances will be recorded on the Unit-e management information system. Applicants who have accepted an offer will be advised to check their emails (including junk mail) regularly and inform the College of any changes to contact details.

- 2.3.6** Student Support Funds applications usually open in April. FE applicants who have been sent a conditional or full offer will receive an automated email with a 'live' link to apply for funding (bursary/EMA). HE students should complete a Scottish Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) application at [Undergrad Funding - SAAS - Higher Education - Student Loan](#).

Applicants who submit their funding application and have provided all of the required documentation by 30 June will be guaranteed to have their funding award in place for the start of session. Full details on how to apply for funding will be provided to applicants along with contact details of Student Advice Centre staff who can assist with this process during the keep warm activities (see 2.4).

- 2.3.7** As previously stated, unsuccessful applicants may, where places are available, be considered for other courses. Where an applicant is considered for another course, within the same curriculum area, the interview process need only include the individual interview (If required) and a rescoring of any specific course questions. Furthermore, if an alternative course is to be offered to the applicant then the Curriculum Manager deeming so should update SAM by transferring the applicant to an appropriate course.

If this transfer is to a course within the same curricula area then the Curriculum Manager can authorise an offer. If the course is within a different curricula area then the Curriculum Manager from the new curricula area will be able to access the application and make an appropriate offer without the applicant having to reapply.

2.4 Keep Warm Activity

- 2.4.1** A calendar of activity will be agreed prior to applications opening to the public. Monthly activities and information will be made available to applicants, and the public where appropriate. Activities will have a whole-College, Campus and Curriculum theme. The calendar will include activities and information to verify that the applicant has applied and subsequently been offered a place on the most suitable course. They will also provide support to the applicant to ensure they are ready to commence their College course at the start of session with all preparatory work completed. The information will be held on the 'Getting Started' section of the College website so that subsequent applicants can access and benefit from it. Attending 'Keep Warm' activities may be a condition of gaining a full offer of a place on a course. The draft calendar for 2021/22 applicants is attached in Appendix 2.
- 2.4.2** If it is discovered that an applicant is not on the most suitable course then the relevant Curriculum Manager should transfer their application to another course (see 2.3.2)
- 2.4.3** The Student Admissions & Funding Team will notify prospective students of enrolment details and induction details. Induction details will also be publicised on the College website and social media platforms.

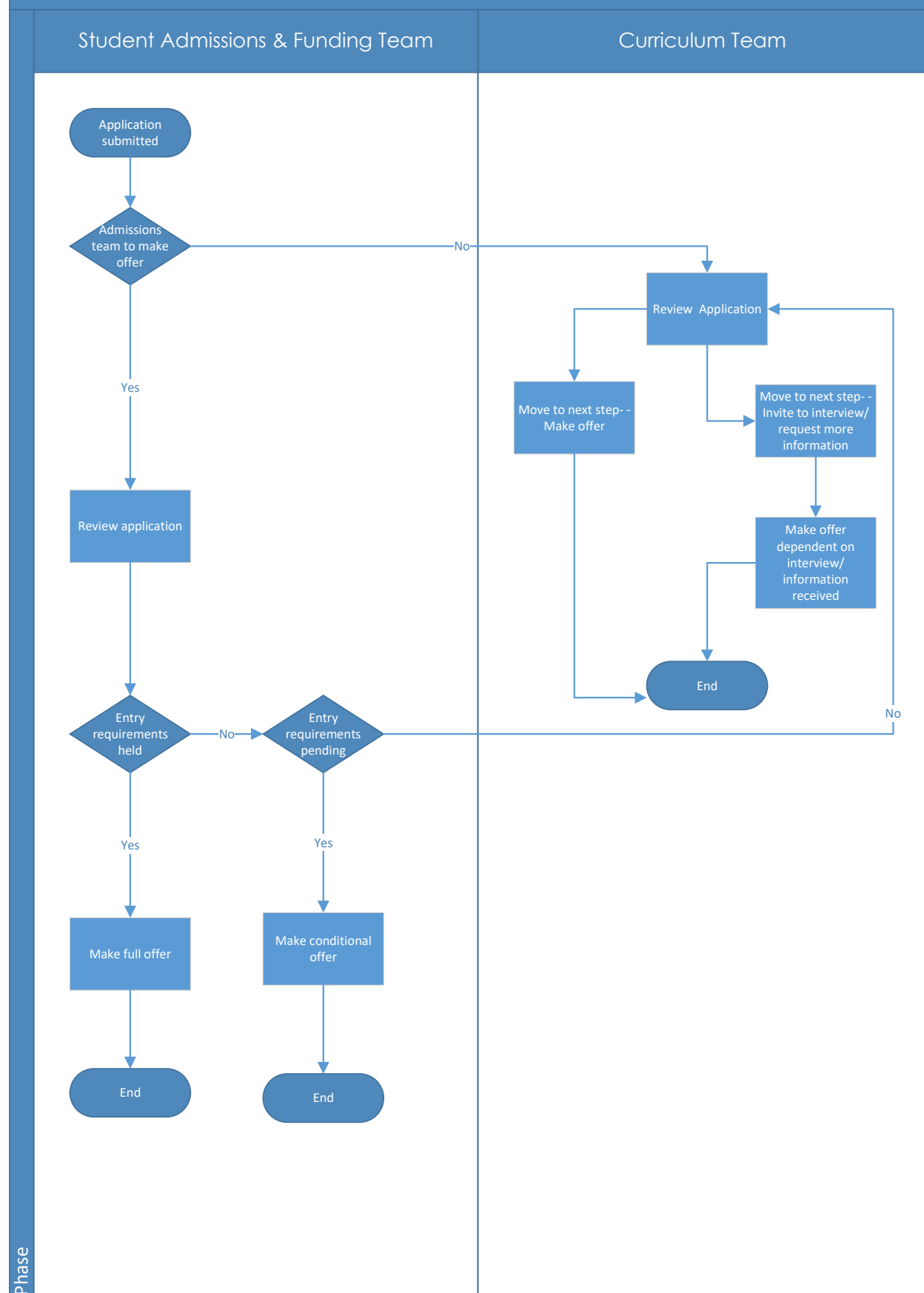
2.5 Appeals

- 2.5.1** Any appeals relating to the admission process must be made in writing. Such correspondence should state the applicant's reasons for appeal and should be sent to the relevant Director of Learning or Director of Business Development. Appeals can only be made on the grounds that the selection procedure has not been followed correctly.

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Appendix 1

Making an Offer to Full-time Applicants



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Appendix 2

Keep Warm Planner		March	April	May	June	July	August	September	M&C requirements	Info
College	Intoduction Video	Student Advice & Support Team	Student Funding Team (open apps w/c 12/04?)	Admin/Student Records	Library Team	Principal welcome?	Student Association	Student IT Helpdesk	These could be added to the Getting Started page on website	Once released clips will stay available to all
	Live Q and A with Support teams	Wed 17th March (chat as part of Open Day)	Wed 14th April (BYOD)	Wed 12th May - Student Funding (Bursary & EMA)	Wed 16th June (Childcare & Discretionary - apps open w/c 05/07)	Wed 21st July	Wed 18th Aug	Wed 15th Sept	Support required to faciliate these - where should they be hosted?	Programme of attendees to follow video info.
	How to Video	Preparing for Study (incl. IT questionnaire) (SAST)	Applying for Funding (Funding) apps open 12/04?	Applying for Transport/Student Cards (Admin)	Preparing for Study (2) (SAST)	Accessing Library+ Resources (Library+)	Online Enrolment	Class Rep info and programme (Students' Association)	These could be added to the Getting Started page on website	Once released clips will stay available to all
Campus	Intoduction Video				Reception staff	Security and Janitorial Team	Health and Safety on Campus	College Catering	Can we simply adapt the Campus pages on the website to include these?	Once released clips will stay available to all
	Live Q and A	Wed 17th March (chat as part of Open Day)	Wed 14th April	Wed 12th May	Wed 16th June	Wed 21st July	Wed 18th Aug	Wed 15th Sept	Can we simply adapt the Campus pages on the website to include these?	Relevant Staff to be invited to session. Campus focus will vary
	How to Video	Virtual Campus Tour	Virtual Campus Tour	Virtual Campus Tour	Virtual Campus Tour	Virtual Campus Tour	Virtual Campus Tour	Virtual Campus Tour	Are you able to pull together a virtual tour for each campus based on existing resources?	Once released clips will stay available to all
Curriculum	Intoduction Video	Curriculum area Introductions	Curriculum area Introductions	Curriculum area Introductions	Curriculum area Introductions		HoF/CM welcome	HoF/CM welcome	Could this also be linked to Campus pages or separate pages created? These won't be the same cross-campus	Once released clips will stay available to all - up to each team, just examples/ideas
	Live Q and A	Wed 17th March (chat as part of Open Day)	Wed 14th April (uniforms/materials)	Wed 12th May	Wed 16th June	Wed 21st July	Wed 18th Aug	Wed 15th Sept	Links to these could be added to the area where we are going to keep copies of all communication sent to applicants?	Select different teams to be represented. Up to each team, just examples/ideas
	How to Video	Course Specific info	Course Specific info	Course Specific info	Course Specific info	Course Specific info	Course Specific info	Course Specific info. APSD	Links to these could be added to the area where we are going to keep copies of all communication sent to applicants?	Once released clips will stay available to all. Up to each team, just examples/ideas

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Status:	Final
Approved by:	Curriculum, Quality and Student Support Committee Leadership Team
Date of Version:	March 2021
Responsibility for Procedure:	Director of Student Access and Information Directors of Learning Director of Business Development
Responsibility for Implementation:	Director of Student Access and Information Directors of Learning, Director of Business Development Heads of Faculty Curriculum Managers, Student Admissions and Funding Manager College Administration and Examinations Manager Student Information Officer
Responsibility for Review:	Director of Student Access and Information
Date of EIA:	May 2019
Review Date:	Feb 2021

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

Part 1. Background Information.

(Please enter relevant information as specified.)

Title of Policy or Procedure. Details of Relevant Practice:	NESCol Admissions Procedure
Person(s) Responsible.	Directors of Learning, Director of Student Access and Information
Date of Assessment:	Feb 2021
What are the aims of the policy, procedure or practice being considered?	The aim of the procedure is to ensure applicants are admitted on to the most suitable course to meet their abilities, needs and aspirations. The procedure aims to ensure equality and opportunity for all, and to ensure the process is free from bias.
Who will this policy, procedure or practice impact upon?	Most full-time students, Teaching teams – especially Curriculum Managers and Heads of Faculty and staff working in the Student Advice Centre.

Part 2. Public Sector Equality Duty comparison

(Consider the proposed action against each element of the PSED and describe potential impact, which may be positive, neutral or negative. Provide details of evidence.)

Need	Impact	Evidence
Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.	There is the potential for the procedure to impact positively on those students who live in SIMD10 areas, or who come under the care experienced banner (although these are not in themselves protected characteristics).	PI data – success ratios, retention data, although success rates for SIMD10 CE students have declined over the last 3 years. Further investigation required. CS2s – reason for withdrawal.
Advancing Equality of Opportunity	Students from all groups will be advised and encouraged to discuss any needs that they have with a Student Support Tutor so that any barriers to attending College and learning are removed or reduced.	PI data – success ratios, retention data. Interview notes.
Promoting Good relations	As this procedure may impact more on students with some Protected Characteristics full communication is essential. Problems should not arise if learners are open about their needs but it should be noted that some individuals may initially be reluctant to discuss sensitive issues.	

Part 3. Action & Outcome

(Following initial assessment, describe any action that will be taken to address impact detected)

Sign-off, authorisation and publishing *	
Name:	Linda Taylor
Position:	Director of Student Access and Information
Date of original EIA:	28 May 2019

**Please note that an electronic sign-off is sufficient*