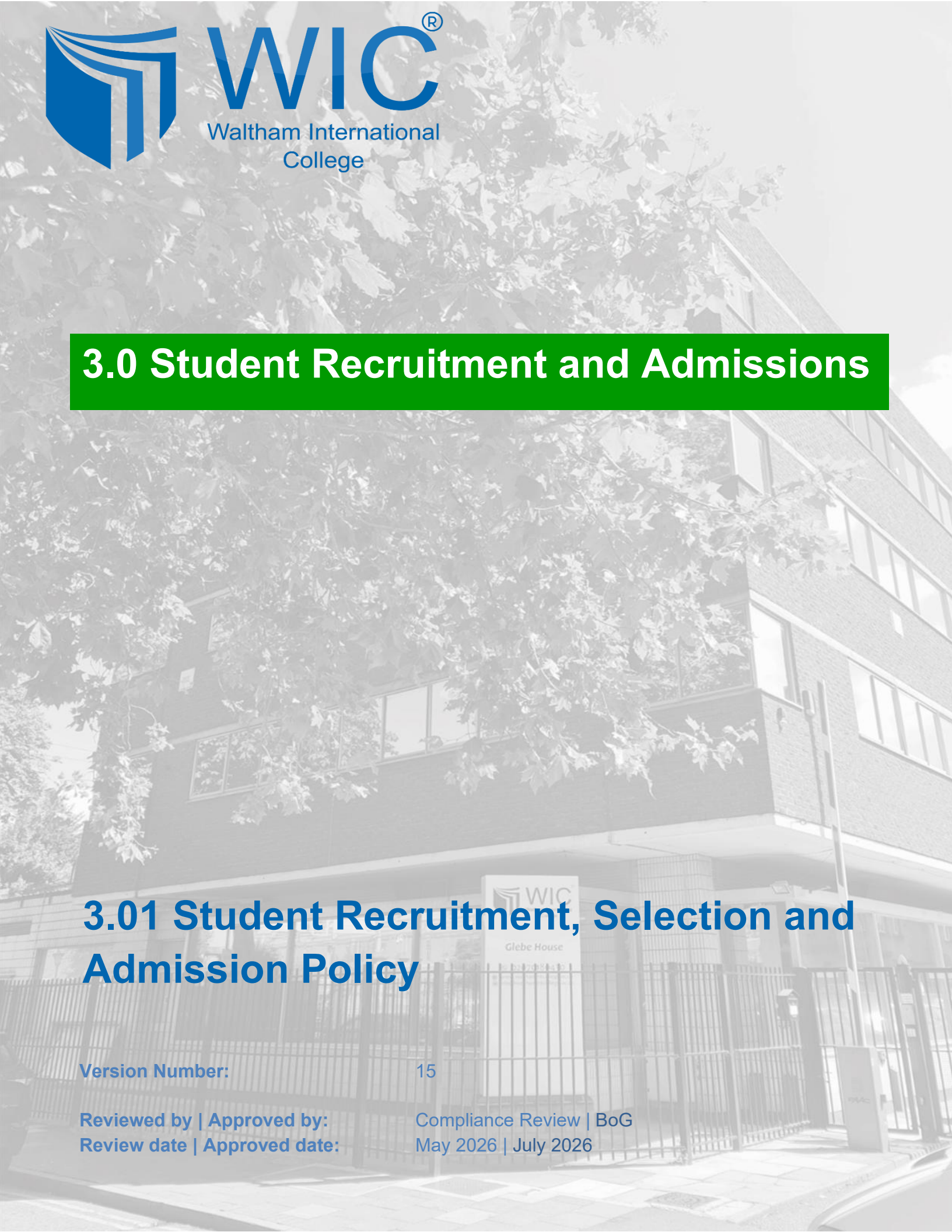
Waltham International College

3.0 Student Recruitment and Admissions



3.01 Student Recruitment, Selection and Admission Policy

Version Number:	15
Reviewed by | Approved by:	Compliance Review | BoG
Review date | Approved date:	May 2026 | July 2026

Compliance Alignment Statement

This version of the Student Recruitment, Selection and Admission Policy has been aligned to current UK and Office for Students requirements as of May 2026. The substantive changes are listed below.

Version Control Statement

Version	Date	Changes	Reason	Author	Next Review
1	15 /08/15		New Policy	Director of Studies	03/10/16
2	14/12/16	None, only the date and version revised	Routine Annual Review	Director of Studies	13/12/17
3	14/12/17	Email addresses updated with a new domain. No change in the process	Routine Annual Review	Director of Studies	13/12/18
4	15/05/18	Information regarding agents has been removed that were being used for FE recruitment. Process aligned with the practice.	No more agents being used by WIC for recruitment, process aligned with the practice.	Director of Studies	14/05/19
5	28/09/18	The complaint against admissions is to be considered by the Academic Board (AB)	To reflect the new changes in Structure	Registrar	29/09/19
6	01/02/2019	Changes in line with the review of the structure. Corrected some wrong spellings and grammar. Removed reference to specific awarding bodies and organisations.	- To reflect the new changes in Structure	Registrar	01/07/2019
7	01/04/19	Authentication of Qualification documents	Improvements in admissions checks	Head of HE	Jul/Aug 2019
8	22/08/15	Complete revision with alignment to the New Quality Code, OFS expectation and other external, and internal reference points and related policies added.	Annual Review	Director of Studies	July 2020
9	Jul 2020	Minor review	Annual Review	Head of HE	Jul/Aug 2021
10	Aug 2021	Minor changes	Annual Review	Head of HE	Aug 2022
11	July 2022	Feedback changed to 2 weeks and DSA support was added, Partner organisation's admissions procedures take precedence when students are registered through a partner, email domain updated	Annual Review	Admissions Manager	July 2023
12	March 2024	Minor changes	Annual Review	Admissions Manager	March 2025
13	Sept 2024	Clarity for users	Annual Review	Quality Lead	Sept 2025
14	Aug 2025	Minor changes on criminal convictions	Annual Review	Head of Admissions	Aug 2026
15	May 2026	- Textual revisions made throughout to bring the policy into compliance with applicable regulations - Changed to new template - Updated External Reference list and Associated Policy List - Section revised and summarised to shorten the detail presented to applicants - Incorporated Recruitment and Selection Section from 4.02 TL Strategy	Compliance Alignment 2026 (OfS)	QA Compliance Review	August 2027

External Reference Points

- OfS Conditions B2, E2
- Equality Act 2010
- Consumer Rights Act 2015
- CMA HE Guidance
- UK Quality Code
- UCAS Guidelines

Related Policies and Documents

Affects all other policy documents. This document should however be read together with the following documents:

- 1.13 Equality and Diversity Policy
- 1.20 Terms and Conditions
- 2.10 Privacy Policy for Applicant Data
- 3.02 Marketing Channels Policy
- 3.03 IAG Policy
- 3.04 Student Contract
- 4.03 Assessment Policy
- 4.06 Complaints Policy
- 4.09 Non-Academic Misconduct Policy
- 4.13 Disability and Inclusion Policy

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1. Purpose

This policy sets out the principles, procedures, and responsibilities that govern how Waltham International College (WIC) recruits, selects, and admits students to its higher education programmes. Its purpose is to ensure that admissions activity is conducted fairly, transparently, and in full compliance with applicable regulatory requirements, including the OfS Conditions of Registration (in particular B2 and E2), the Equality Act 2010, the Consumer Rights Act 2015, CMA guidance on higher education, and the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all admissions activity undertaken by or on behalf of WIC, across both London and Birmingham campuses, including online and blended delivery modes. It covers:

- All prospective students applying to WIC higher education programmes, including foundation year, undergraduate, and top-up degrees, whether applying directly or through UCAS.
- All staff involved in admissions, marketing, and recruitment activity, including admissions officers, academic staff contributing to selection decisions, and agents or representatives acting on behalf of WIC.
- All stages of the admissions cycle, from pre-application enquiry through to enrolment, including the provision of pre-contract information, assessment of applications, offer-making, and induction.
- Programmes delivered in partnership with an awarding body (e.g. Leeds Trinity University). Where an awarding body's own admissions requirements or procedures conflict with this policy, those requirements take precedence and applicants should consult the relevant partner institution's guidance.

3. Introduction

Student recruitment, selection, and admission are among the most significant activities WIC undertakes. They shape the composition of the student body, determine whether individual learners have the genuine potential to succeed, and signal the College's values to the public and to regulators. Getting admissions right is therefore not only an operational matter but a quality and integrity issue at the heart of WIC's registration with the Office for Students (OfS).

This policy reflects WIC's commitment to fair and transparent admissions practice, grounded in the Schwartz Report principles and the expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. It ensures that the College meets its obligations under OfS Condition B2 (academic experience and outcomes) and Condition E2 (information and transparency), as well as its duties under the Equality Act 2010, the Consumer Rights Act 2015, and CMA guidance on the provision of information to prospective students. WIC is additionally committed to widening participation, and this policy is designed to actively support and encourage applications from groups that are under-represented in higher education, in line with the College's Access and Participation Plan and OfS expectations.

The policy should be read alongside WIC's Access and Participation Plan, Student Protection Plan, Equality and Diversity Policy, and the terms and conditions provided to applicants. Where students are admitted to programmes delivered in partnership with an awarding body, this policy operates alongside the partner institution's own admissions framework.

4. Principles of Fair Admissions

WIC is committed to fair, transparent, and consistent admissions processes that provide equal opportunity to all individuals with the potential to benefit from and succeed in higher education. Our admissions process reflects the Schwartz Report principles:

- Transparent - entry requirements, processes, and decisions are clearly communicated
- Fair - each application is assessed individually, without partiality or unlawful bias
- Honest - information provided to applicants is accurate and up to date
- Consistent - all applicants are assessed against the same published criteria
- Accessible - barriers to access are minimised, consistent with our Access and Participation Plan
- Personalised - assessments take account of individual context, qualifications, and potential
- Timely - decisions are communicated to applicants as quickly as possible

WIC will not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 at any stage of the admissions process.

5. Policy Aims

Ensuring students are on the right programme is the foundation of student success. WIC's principal aim is to assess each applicant individually and offer admission to the programme that best matches their ability, ambitions, and potential, irrespective of social, racial, religious, or financial background.

To achieve this, the College is committed to widening participation and actively encourages applications from groups traditionally under-represented in higher education, from local and non-traditional communities, and from mature learners and those returning to study. Each application is assessed on its merits, free from partiality or bias, and unnecessary barriers to access are identified and removed.

WIC undertakes to provide all prospective students with accurate, accessible information, advice, and guidance to support informed decision-making at every stage of their journey. Applications are assessed consistently and in line with WIC and partner institution requirements. Offers are made on the basis of individual merit and demonstrated potential to succeed in both the chosen programme and the associated profession or career pathway. Where a place cannot be offered, applicants are signposted to appropriate contacts and alternative options.

The College ensures that academic, careers, and personal support is available to all students throughout their time at WIC, with the aim of enabling successful continuation and completion.

6. Regulatory Compliance

6.1 OfS Condition B2 – Quality and Standards

The College's admissions processes are designed to ensure that students admitted to our programmes have the aptitude and potential to succeed in and beyond their studies. We ensure that information provided to applicants before offer and enrolment is clear, accurate, and sufficient to enable informed decision-making, in line with OfS Condition B2 and CMA guidance on UK higher education.

6.2 OfS Condition B3 – Student Protection

Recruitment materials and offer letters contain clear, accurate information about programme content, delivery, assessment, fees, and additional costs, in line with the requirements of the Student Protection Plan and the CMA guidance on provision of pre-contract information.

6.3 Access and Participation

WIC's admissions processes actively support its Access and Participation Plan commitments. Targets, actions, and progress against these are published annually in accordance with OfS requirements.

7. Pre-Application Information for Applicants

Before applying, prospective students can access the following information from our Website (www.wic.ac.uk), prospectus, and other materials:

- Programme content, modules, delivery modes, and duration
- Entry requirements (academic, English language, and any other requirements)
- Assessment methods and workload expectations
- Tuition fees, deposits, and additional costs
- Available support services (academic, pastoral, disability)
- How to apply and application deadlines
- The College's complaints, withdrawal, and refund policies

All pre-application information must be accurate, not misleading, and comply with the CMA guidance on providing information to students. This information forms part of the student contract once an offer is accepted.

8. The Application Process

8.1 How to Apply

All prospective students must complete the College's online application form, available at www.wic.ac.uk. Applications for programmes delivered in partnership with an awarding body may also require submission via UCAS or the partner's own system. All required supporting documents must be submitted at the time of application or as soon as possible thereafter.

8.2 Application Deadlines

Although applications may be submitted at any time for the next admission cycle, applicants are normally expected to submit their application at least 8 weeks before their programme's start date to allow sufficient time for assessment and enrolment. Applications submitted after this deadline will be considered on a space-available basis.

8.3 Stage 1 – Initial Assessment

On receipt of an application, the Admissions Team will:

- Verify the applicant's identity and prior qualifications documents

- Check that the application is complete and that all required documentation has been provided
- Conduct an initial eligibility assessment against the published entry criteria
- Conduct a telephone screening to assess accuracy of information, motivation, communication skills, and English language proficiency

Initial assessment and shortlisting will be completed within two working days of receipt of a complete application.

8.4 Stage 2 – Admission Assessment

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend an admissions assessment session. The assessment schedule will be confirmed with applicants and, where reasonably possible, arranged to align with their availability and individual circumstances. The assessment will include:

- Entry tests for English literacy, numeracy and ICT – requirements for entry tests are determined by the relevant awarding body. The specific test criteria for each programme are set out on the College's website at wic.ac.uk.
- An essay written under private and secure conditions
- An interview to assess English proficiency, detect any support needs, and establish the applicant's intent and motivation to study

Assessment interviews are conducted face to face to enhance the applicant's experience and allow admissions staff to identify any support needs at the earliest opportunity. Where face to face attendance is not possible, alternative arrangements may be made at the discretion of the Admissions Team. Selection interviews are conducted by the Admissions Team, in collaboration with the relevant Programme Leader where necessary.

Where the standard assessment process does not provide a sufficient basis for a decision, applicants may be asked to submit additional evidence in support of their application. Applicants will be contacted directly with clear guidance on what is required.

Where required by the awarding body, Stage 2 may include a review by the partner institution's admissions team.

8.5 Admission Decisions

The Admissions Team will assess the full application, taking into account whether the entry criteria have been met and whether the applicant has demonstrated appropriate intent and potential. Decisions will be communicated in writing.

Where an offer is made, the Offer Letter will set out any conditions the applicant must meet before their registration is confirmed. Applicants are advised to read the Offer Letter carefully and contact the Admissions Team if they have any queries before accepting.

The College reserves the right to decline admission to applicants in the following circumstances:

- Applicants who have previously been excluded from WIC or any other educational institution
- Individuals who previously attended the College but failed to make sufficient academic progress
- Applicants where there is credible evidence of a risk to the safety of other students, staff, or visitors

- Applicants whose behaviour towards WIC or its awarding partners has been determined to be vexatious

WIC will give fair consideration to applicants from a range of qualification backgrounds, including those with experiential rather than formal academic qualifications.

Applicants will normally receive a decision within three weeks of submission of a complete application. Where an offer is made, applicants will be given 14 days to accept or reject it. Acceptance must be confirmed in writing. Where an applicant does not respond within this period, the offer may be withdrawn. Applicants who accept an offer and subsequently enrol will benefit from a fourteen-day cooling-off period, as set out in the Induction and Enrolment section of this policy.

All offers of admission are approved by the Head of Marketing and Admissions, following confirmation from the Principal and the relevant Programme Manager that admissions procedures have been applied consistently. This confirmation is based on a review of a representative sample of admissions decisions. Where enrolment numbers are subject to controls, the Principal and Programme Managers must confirm that admissions do not exceed the College's agreed quota before offer letters are issued. For programmes delivered in partnership with an awarding body, offers are made by the partner institution in accordance with its own procedures.

8.6 Induction and Enrolment

Students who accept the offer of admission and attend induction are enrolled by the Registry Team and registered with the awarding partner. Students are given a fourteen day cooling off period during which they can change their mind regarding their studies, or change course where they can demonstrate appropriate subject knowledge or experience. During induction, the Head of Registry and admissions staff provide students with accurate and timely information and guidance, supported by Programme Managers who offer programme-specific academic guidance as required.

The registration process is outlined in the Assessment Policy, which are available to students via the College's intranet and student handbook.

9. Entry Requirements

9.1 Academic Requirements

Entry requirements for each programme are published annually on the College's website and reviewed with guidance from awarding partners. Meeting the published entry criteria does not guarantee an offer of a place; where demand exceeds availability, the College will prioritise applicants who best evidence their potential to succeed on the programme.

The minimum institutional entry requirements are:

- For foundation year and undergraduate programmes: at least one Level 3 qualification (for applicants under 21 years of age), or part-time engagement in relevant paid or voluntary employment or work placement (for applicants aged 21 and over)
- GCSE grade 4/C or above in English Language, or an accepted equivalent qualification
- Programme-specific requirements exceeding these minima are published on the College's website and on the relevant awarding body's website

Alternative entry routes are available for applicants who are unable to meet standard requirements. Applicants in this position should contact the Admissions Team to discuss their circumstances before applying.

Admissions staff have discretion to take into account an applicant's level of prior experience and wider academic achievement when considering applications for specific programmes.

All qualification documents submitted in support of an application will be verified for authenticity. This may include direct crosschecking with the relevant awarding body. Staff verifying qualifications are required to record and sign confirmation of their authenticity. Applicants with qualifications awarded outside the UK may be asked to provide certified translations or to seek confirmation of UK equivalence through UK ENIC (the UK National Information Centre for the recognition and evaluation of international qualifications and skills: www.enic.org.uk).

9.2 English Language Requirements

All applicants must demonstrate sufficient English language proficiency to study successfully at higher education level. Accepted qualifications and minimum scores are published on the College's website. Where an applicant's first language is English or where they have studied in English, appropriate evidence will be required.

English language competency is assessed as follows:

- Applicants who have obtained qualifications in the UK in the last five years may be exempt from further English language testing
- Where required, applicants may complete a written statement of a prescribed length in English, produced on-site under supervised conditions, in place of a formal English language test
- All English language tests and written statements will be assessed and verified by a qualified assessor and/or Internal Verifier
- The admissions interview will also serve as an assessment of spoken English language competency

9.3 Numeracy Requirements

In addition, some awarding bodies require applicants to demonstrate an appropriate level of mathematical competence through specified qualifications and/or an entry test. Any such mathematics requirements will be detailed within the published entry criteria for the relevant programme.

9.4 Recognition of Prior Learning

The College will consider applications from individuals seeking Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Applicants wishing to claim RPL should contact the Admissions Team to discuss their circumstances before applying. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer are addressed in full in the Assessment Policy (4.03).

10. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Admissions

WIC will not discriminate against any applicant on the basis of any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. Admissions staff are trained in equality and diversity awareness and unconscious bias.

Applicants who disclose a disability or learning support need at application stage will be signposted to the College's Student Support services. Disclosure will not disadvantage any application. Reasonable adjustments will be made to the assessment process where required.

The College monitors admissions data by protected characteristics and publishes this as part of its Access and Participation reporting obligations.

10.1 Mature Applicants and Students Returning to Education

WIC welcomes applications from mature students and those returning to education. There is no upper age limit for entry to WIC programmes; however, applicants must normally be aged 18 or over at the start of their programme, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Admissions staff will ensure that mature applicants are not disadvantaged in the selection process. Where the standard assessment process may not fully evidence a mature applicant's suitability, the Admissions Team, supported by the relevant Programme Leader, will seek and consider alternative evidence. Where this alternative evidence is judged to meet the entry criteria, the applicant may not be required to satisfy the standard academic entry requirements. Applicants without formal qualifications may be considered on the basis of prior experience, evidenced through references and supporting statements.

10.2 Students with Additional Support Needs

WIC welcomes applications from prospective students with disabilities or additional support needs. All applications are assessed against the published selection criteria for the relevant programme. Disclosure of a disability or support need will not disadvantage any application.

The College will consider, discuss, and implement reasonable adjustments to ensure that students can access and succeed in their studies. Where, exceptionally, the adjustments required cannot be made in a way that is practicable or that ensures equitable learner experience — including where health and safety considerations or professional regulatory requirements such as Fitness to Practise standards cannot be overcome — the College reserves the right to withdraw an offer. The applicant will be notified promptly and, where appropriate, assisted in identifying an alternative programme or provider.

All applicants who disclose a disability or additional support need, and who accept an offer of a place, will be contacted by the Head of Student Support prior to the start of their studies. This contact will ensure that:

- individual support needs are discussed at the earliest opportunity
- any required adjustments are identified and implemented before the start of the programme
- any adjustments needed during placements are considered and planned for in advance

11. Applicant Data

All data submitted to WIC during the admissions process is used to assess the suitability of an applicant for study at the College. Application data may also be used for statistical and regulatory reporting purposes, including the lawful sharing of data with awarding partners and relevant sector agencies including the Office for Students, the Designated Data Body, and Student Finance England. Where an applicant is admitted, their application data forms part of their student record and is shared with the relevant awarding partner as required.

WIC processes applicant data in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Further information is set out in the College's Privacy Policy for Applicant Data (Policy 2.10), available on the College's website.

12. Fitness to Practise

Some WIC programmes lead to both an academic qualification and eligibility to practise in a vocational or regulated sector. Where graduates may work within a regulated profession or with vulnerable individuals, this will be stated in the admissions information for the programme concerned, along with any pre-entry checks required.

Depending on the programme, conditions of entry may include an occupational health assessment and/or a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, particularly where external placement requirements apply. The College reserves the right to decline admission to such programmes where an applicant is unable to provide a satisfactory occupational health or DBS outcome. Where admission is refused on this basis, the College will provide the applicant with feedback explaining the decision. All information provided in connection with an occupational health or DBS check is treated as confidential and handled in accordance with the College's data protection obligations.

Where further information comes to light following enrolment, whether through a subsequent disclosure or otherwise, that was not available or declared during the admissions process, the student's enrolment may be reviewed and, where necessary, cancelled.

13. Unsuccessful Applications

Where an applicant is not offered a place, the College will communicate this decision in writing within two weeks of the application being assessed. Applicants will be given reasons for the decision and signposted to alternative options, programmes, or providers where appropriate.

13.1 Feedback and Appeals

Applicants who wish to appeal an admissions decision may do so in writing by completing the *Appeal Against Recruitment, Selection and Admission Decision Form*, available from the College's website. Completed forms should be submitted by email to appeals@wic.ac.uk or by post to: Appeals, Waltham International College, Glebe House, Vicarage Drive, IG11 7NR. The College will aim to respond to admissions appeals within 15 working days of receipt of the completed form. The outcome of the appeal is final.

The Admissions Team maintains a log of all appeals received and their outcomes, which is reviewed as part of the annual admissions monitoring process.

13.2 Complaints

If an applicant is dissatisfied with any aspect of the admissions service, they should contact the Admissions Manager in the first instance. An acknowledgement will be provided within five working days and a substantive response within ten working days. If the applicant remains dissatisfied, they may submit a formal complaint to complaints@wic.ac.uk as per Complaints Policy. The College will aim to respond to formal admissions complaints within 15 working days of receipt.

14. Applicants who Re-Apply and Re-Admittance of Excluded Students

Applicants may re-apply for their chosen programme following an unsuccessful decision, provided they can demonstrate a material change from their previous application. Applications will be assessed against the advertised selection criteria for the relevant programme, and WIC may take into account information from any previous application or period of registration when considering suitability.

Any student previously excluded or suspended from WIC may normally re-apply after a minimum 12 month waiting period. Applicants in this position are strongly encouraged to contact the Admissions Team before submitting a formal application to discuss the merits of re-applying.

15. Deferred Entry

Applicants who wish to defer entry should notify the Admissions Team in writing. Deferred entry may be granted at the College's discretion, subject to continued satisfaction of entry requirements and available places. A deferral does not guarantee a place in the next intake.

16. Applicants with Criminal Convictions

WIC's admissions process forms part of its broader safeguarding framework. Applicants are required to declare any unspent criminal convictions on their enrolment form. Where a declaration is made, the applicant will be referred to a designated safeguarding officer to complete a risk assessment prior to enrolment being confirmed.

The risk assessment is conducted by the Programme Manager, unless delegated to another senior manager. Its purpose is to identify and assess any applicant whose known behaviour or record may indicate a risk to themselves, other students, staff, visitors, or the College environment. Each case will be considered individually, fairly, and objectively.

WIC reserves the right to decline an application where the nature of a conviction could adversely affect other students or stakeholders. All information disclosed during this process is treated as strictly confidential and made available only to staff with a legitimate need to know. Details of the declaration and the decision reached will be recorded on a standard form and retained in accordance with the College's data retention policy.

WIC reserves the right to conduct a risk assessment at any point and to withdraw, or request the withdrawal of, a student where it is established that incorrect information was provided during the application or enrolment process. Applicants refused a place as a result of a risk assessment may appeal under the Appeal Against Admissions Decision procedure.

Where a programme requires students to work with children, young people, or vulnerable adults, applicants must complete an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before commencing study. The cost of this check is normally met by the applicant. Where an enhanced DBS check reveals prior criminal behaviour giving rise to concern, WIC reserves the right to withdraw any offer of a place.

17. Fitness to Study

The College has a Fitness to Study Policy (Policy 4.11), which is designed to protect both individual students and the wider College community. Where it becomes apparent that a successful applicant may be unfit to study as defined by that policy, an initial discussion will take place with the applicant. Where the matter cannot be resolved through discussion, the formal procedures set out in the Fitness to Study Policy will be followed.

18. False or Misleading Information

Where it is discovered that an applicant has provided false or misleading information in their application, the College reserves the right to withdraw any offer made or, if the student has already enrolled, to terminate their registration. This includes any misrepresentation of qualifications, identity, or eligibility. The College's non-academic misconduct procedures will apply.

19. Liability

WIC takes reasonable care to ensure that all students and applicants are safe whilst on campus, attending off-campus activities, or using College services. The College cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage to personal property, including computers and software, and applicants and students are strongly advised to insure their property against theft and other risks.

WIC will not be liable for failure to fulfil its obligations under this or any other College policy where such failure results from events outside the College's reasonable control, including but not limited to acts of terrorism, civil disorder, fire, natural disasters, or failure of public telecommunications or power infrastructure. In such circumstances, WIC will take reasonable steps to notify affected students and will reinstate its obligations as soon as practicable, which may include delivery of teaching online or at alternative venues.

20. Programme Changes and Withdrawals

WIC and its awarding partners endeavour not to make changes to programmes once they are advertised. Where updates are necessary to ensure teaching and learning outcomes remain current and student experience is not compromised, any changes made during the application cycle will be communicated to affected applicants at the earliest opportunity, allowing them to decide whether to proceed with or withdraw from their application.

Where changes occur after a programme has started, students will be consulted and their agreement sought prior to implementation. All such changes are subject to internal approval before introduction.

In certain circumstances, a programme may be withdrawn during the admissions cycle due to insufficient student numbers. Where this occurs, accepted applicants will be offered either a deferral to the next admissions cycle or active support in identifying and securing a place on an alternative programme at WIC or another provider.

21. Monitoring and Review

The Admissions Team monitors and reviews the effectiveness and fairness of admissions processes annually, including:

- Conversion rates and offer rates by protected characteristic
- Reasons for unsuccessful applications
- Feedback from applicants
- Complaints relating to admissions

Findings are reported to the Senior Management Team and used to improve processes and inform the Access and Participation Plan.

22. Appendices

There are no appendices for this policy.