

## ADMISSIONS POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the Ada, the National College for Digital Skills' policy for admitting students and explains the process followed when deciding which applicants are offered a place. It also sets out the circumstances when a decision made under this policy can be reviewed and the process that must be followed.

The College is committed to equal opportunities and will educate students across the full spectrum of academic ability, subject to the admissions criteria.

The College aims to recruit students that broadly reflect the communities it serves and support all its students into the digital sector so that the sector better reflects the diversity of society.

All students have equal access to the curriculum and there is a learning support programme for students with special educational needs.

### 2. GENERAL INFORMATION

#### 2.1 Age

Students can be admitted to the College at:

- 16 years of age for 16-19 courses (after KS4/GCSE)
- 18 years of age and above for Post 18 courses (after Level 3 qualifications)

Applicants who will be 18 at the start of the 16-19 courses cannot be considered for a place on the Level 3 course but could be considered for the Post 18 courses if they have completed a relevant Level 3 qualification.

#### 2.2 Post 18 Only

The entry criteria and admissions process for apprenticeships will be decided by the industry partners that will be hiring the students. The College will support the industry partners' admissions process but it will ultimately be the industry partner and final decisions regarding employment lying solely with the employer.

#### 2.3 Numbers of places

The College will publish annually its admissions number in line with the admission criteria. The College admits the following numbers of students:

**Year 12 for 2018/19:** approximately 80-100 students

**Post 18 qualifications:** Numbers will be decided by industry partners and when the roles become available. They will be advertised on the College website and through the College email newsletters.

Please note that transfer from 16-19 to Post 19 qualifications is not automatic and students will have to meet the industry partner criteria.

## **2.4 Eligibility**

The college admits students nationally.

An application can be accepted from parents residing overseas for a young person not yet resident in the UK, as long as (i) the young person is an EU National or (ii) the parents intend to relocate and work in the UK. In such circumstances, the College will consider when the young person is expected to be resident in the UK and whether the parent's application to enter the UK has been or will be successful. In order that places offered are not wasted because they cannot be taken up, the College will not make an offer to any student resident overseas unless they have a right of residence in the UK or it is clear beyond reasonable doubt that the parent's application to enter and stay in the UK will be successful. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure this is the case.

## **2.5 Accommodation**

The College is a day College. It is not responsible for the supervision of students outside of College hours. It has a national catchment area and its day is longer than many Colleges'.

16-19 students may live away from home if necessary, but parents must take responsibility for their accommodation being satisfactory, and make sure that the day-to-day support for the student is in place.

## **2.6 College year**

The College year for Post 16 students consists of 6 terms, in line with the local authority. The College does not give permission for College students to take vacations during term time.

## **3. ADMISSION CRITERIA**

The criteria that must be satisfied before applicants can be offered a place to study at the College are set out below.

Applicants must:-

- (i) aim for a life in the digital sector or related fields
- (ii) demonstrate (with evidence) an aptitude for and commitment to the digital world and its associated technologies
- (iii) demonstrate, during the application process, a real determination to study, practise and succeed

(iv) have the stamina and drive for the demanding schedule

(v) demonstrate to the teachers and practitioners they meet or work with, during the application process, that they would benefit from the education that the College has to offer

The above criteria are referred to in this policy as the Admission Criteria.

#### 4. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

The College recommends that all prospective applicants attend an open event before applying for a place. This will enable parents and applicants to understand the way in which the College works and decide whether the College is right for them.

Students or parents/guardians may obtain a prospectus and application form in any of the following ways:

- by visiting the College's website at [www.ada.ac.uk](http://www.ada.ac.uk)
- by phone (020 3105 0125), written request (Ada. National College for Digital Skills, Broad Lane N15 4AG) or by visiting the College; or
- from careers conventions in their college/school or by attending a College Open Evening.

Application will always be online through the website, with the new prospectus available in October.

Applicants are encouraged to apply well before the deadline dates. The deadline dates for post 16 are in waves: wave 1 - **15th December 2017**; wave 2 – **23rd March 2018**; wave 3 – **6th July 2018**. The college will only use the second and third wave of recruitment if there are not sufficient suitable candidates meeting the admission criteria in the previous wave.

Application forms completed and submitted online will be acknowledged automatically on submission. Applicants are encouraged to keep this email as proof of application.

Applicants who submit incomplete applications will be sent an email informing them that their application is incomplete and requesting the information that is still required. The application will not be processed until this information is supplied.

Applicants who do not submit a complete application in time to be processed by the relevant deadline may find that all places have been allocated. The application will be placed on a waiting list without being assessed.

If places become available before the start of the academic year, applicants on the waiting list may be invited to continue the process as outlined below.

Applicants who have been home tutored and therefore do not have a school report must contact their Local Education Authority for an assessment showing their educational progress. Without this information the application will not be processed.

The College reserves the right to reject or expel any application that provides false or misleading information.

All applications received by the relevant deadline will be dealt with entirely on their merits.

It is very important that applicants read the application form carefully and ensure all information is complete and the relevant documents enclosed to avoid disappointment.

### **5. HOW APPLICATIONS ARE CONSIDERED**

#### **5.1 16-19 Students**

There is a two-stage process that is followed when applications are received by the College.

##### **(i) Preliminary review**

At this stage all completed application forms received on time will be processed and an Assessment Interview offered.

Applicants who clearly do not satisfy the Admission Criteria may be told they are unsuccessful at this stage.

##### **(ii) Assessment Interview**

Candidates who meet the Admission Criteria will be invited to participate in an Assessment Interview meeting with at least two members of College staff, usually preceded by a structured assessment task. This stage of the process is referred to in this policy as the Assessment Interview.

Applicants will be given advance warning of the Assessment Interview (usually two weeks) and informed whether they have to prepare or bring anything with them.

All applicants will go through the same Initial Assessment Interview.

The structured assessment task is intended to be with, and for the benefit of, the applicant. Therefore, parents/guardians are requested not to participate. Parents/guardians of 16-19 applicants are welcome to attend the structured discussion with the college staff should they request this.

The cycle of the Assessment Interview will start within 6 weeks of an application deadline and depend on suitable application numbers from previous waves of recruitment.

The date given for an Assessment Interview cannot be changed unless it is for a previously arranged hospital appointment or public exam.

Applicants should include any dates and supporting documentation concerning non-availability with their supplementary application form by return and the college will do all it can to accommodate them.

The decision to offer a place following an Assessment Interview will be based on the professional judgment of the staff involved, who will consider: (i) the applicant's performance during an Assessment Interview; (ii) reports and references from the applicant's school/college; and (iii) the extent to which the applicant satisfies the Admission Criteria.

### 5.2 Post 18 Students

All Post 18 students will need to meet the criteria set out by the industry employers. Final decisions on employment will be with the employer.

## 6. OUTCOME OF APPLICATION

### 6.1 16-19 Students

Applicants will be notified of one of the following outcomes to their application by letter:-

- (i) an offer of a place (see note (a) below)
- (ii) an offer of a place with special medical conditions (see note (b) below)
- (iii) a place on the reserve list
- (iv) a decision not to offer a place at the college, but with a recommendation that the applicant might wish to apply for an alternative course at our partner organisations
- (v) a decision not to offer a place

**Note (a):** Offers of places at the College are subject to the previous Key Stage having been completed: i.e. in the case of 16-19 applicants Key Stage 4 must be completed.

**Note (b):** If there is doubt as to the student's medical capacity to undertake a course, an offer may be contingent on the results of a medical assessment.

It is important that the applicant, having been offered a place at the College, does not drop her/his current standards of work and commitment in the College s/he will be leaving.

It is essential that the above guidelines are understood and acted upon to enable the student to concentrate on his/her studies. Failure to do so could result in a student not being admitted to the College.

Brief written feedback to assist in understanding the decision reached following an initial assessment Interview can be provided **on written request** only after the application process has been completed.

Where an applicant has requested a Second Attempt Assessment Interview (see below) feedback cannot be provided until after this next part of the process is completed. This means that if the decision is not to invite the applicant to a Second Attempt Assessment Interview, feedback can be provided at that stage. If a Second Attempt Assessment Interview is offered to the applicant, feedback will not be given until after the Second Attempt Assessment Interview.

Requests for feedback must be received in writing within 14 days of the decision being communicated to the applicant. As the admissions process may still be continuing for other applicants, feedback may take some time to provide. The College will endeavour to respond to a request for feedback within 6 weeks.

Applicants will receive a final decision on their application for a place at the College within six weeks of their final Assessment Interview.

All decisions will be communicated via post only. We will not send any information electronically via fax, email or telephone.

### **6.2 Post 18 Students**

All decisions on employment will be communicated to applicants via the employer after the recruitment process has occurred and in line with the individual companies policies and procedures.

In all cases the decision of The College is final, subject to the internal appeals process.

## **7. CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN A DECISION CAN BE REVIEWED**

### **7.1 16-19 Students**

If an applicant or parent/guardian is dissatisfied with a decision made under this policy there are certain circumstances where such a decision can be reviewed. The decisions that can be reviewed are set out below.

**All applications for reviews must be received at the College within 14 days of notification of the relevant decision.**

The College recommends that applicants send any request for a review Special Delivery as the College cannot be held responsible for non-receipt of correspondence. Date stamped envelopes will not be considered proof of postage. The College will not accept verbal requests for a review.

**(i) A decision not to invite an applicant to an Assessment Interview following a preliminary review of the application**

Applicants not invited to an Assessment Interview following a preliminary consideration of their application, because they are considered not to have met the Admission Criteria can request a

further review of the decision. This means that the application will be looked at again against the Admission Criteria by a member of the Senior Leadership Team not involved in the original decision.

If successful, the applicant will be invited to participate in an Assessment Interview and the application process will continue as set out in this policy.

There is no further right of review or appeal for those applicants who are unsuccessful following a further review of their application.

### **(ii) A decision not to offer a place at the College following an Assessment Interview**

An applicant who is invited to an Assessment Interview but is then not offered a place at the College, or is offered a place but with special conditions, may apply for a Second Attempt Assessment Interview.

A Second Attempt Assessment Interview is an opportunity to attend an Assessment Interview for a second time and be considered by different staff to those who were involved at the first Assessment Interview.

It is important that applicants applying for a Second Attempt Assessment Interview provide reasons why they consider that they should be given a second attempt. They should also refer to the Admission Criteria and demonstrate how such criteria is satisfied.

A Second Attempt Assessment Interview is not automatically granted. The College will review carefully the reasons given for requesting a Second Attempt Assessment Interview and will refer again to the extent to which the applicant satisfies the Admission Criteria.

Applicants who are unsuccessful in seeking a Second Attempt Assessment Interview can be provided with written feedback relating to their first Assessment Interview. There is no further right of appeal in these circumstances.

Applicants who are successful in seeking a Second Attempt Assessment Interview will be invited to the College and their application will be considered by a teacher and a member of the Senior Leadership Team, who were not involved in the original Assessment Interview.

The decision to offer a place following a Second Attempt Assessment Interview will be based on the professional judgment of the staff involved who will consider: (i) the applicant's performance during an initial Assessment Interview; (ii) reports and references from the applicant's College; and (iii) the extent to which the applicant satisfies the Admission Criteria.

The date given for a Second Attempt Assessment Interview cannot be changed unless it is for a previously arranged hospital appointment or public exam.

### **(iii) A decision not to offer a place at the College following a Second Attempt Interview or a decision to offer a place with special conditions**

If, following a Second Attempt Assessment Interview, an applicant is not offered a place, or is offered a place but with the special conditions, s/he can request that the decision be reviewed, **but only if it can be shown that the College has failed to follow this admission policy**. This is referred to below as “Permitted Grounds”.

A request for a review under this category should be made in writing to the Chair of Governors/Trustees.

In respect of 16-19 applicants, the applicant must write the letter.

**It is important that the letter requesting a review must state clearly the grounds for seeking a review, specifying clearly how it is believed that the College has not followed this policy on admissions.**

Following receipt of a letter of appeal, it will be considered by the Chair of Governors/Trustees (or other governor nominated by him) to confirm that the request for a review has been made on Permitted Grounds.

If the request has not, in the reasonable opinion of the Chair of Governors/Trustees (or such other governor nominated by him) been made on Permitted Grounds, the request will be refused at that point, there will be no further consideration of the matter and no further right of review.

If the Chair of Governors/Trustees considers that the request for a review has been made on Permitted Grounds, a panel of governors will then consider the matter. The panel may undertake such enquiry into the matter as it considers appropriate and necessary to reach a determination. The panel also may (but is not obliged to) choose to invite the applicant and/or parent/guardian to a meeting if this is considered necessary to better understand the grounds for the request or because the panel wishes to ask questions of the applicant or parent/guardian.

After careful consideration of the request for a review and any representations made by the applicant, parent/guardian and the College, the panel will conclude by:

- upholding the original decision; or
- referring the application for admission back to the College to be considered afresh.

The decision of the panel, which is final, will be communicated in writing. There will be no further right of appeal at this point, including any further appeal after a panel has awarded a fresh application decision and the application process still results in not awarding a place at the College.

Flow Diagram for application, please see appendix 1

### **7.2 Post 18 Students**

Any review of a Post 18 application for employment must follow the industry employers process in line with the individual companies policies and procedures.

## **8 Amendments**

The College reserves the right to amend the admissions policy at anytime without notice to the applicant.

