

WORCESTER SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

**POLICY ON COURSE
PROGRESSION FOR STUDENTS**

May 2018



Policy on Course Progression for Students

Purpose

The increasing range and flexibility of College courses enables students to follow a greater variety of route ways to their preferred qualifications. However, progression from one course to another or even through elements of the same course will not be successful if students have not achieved at the required level beforehand.

This policy sets out the criteria to be met by students intending to progress from one College course to another and the procedures to be followed to enable them to do so. The reasons why it is necessary are:

- to ensure that guidance given to students is in accordance with the formal requirements that will be applied
- to ensure consistency across the College departments and tutorial system
- to ensure that students who have qualifications that are marginal for the commencement of a course have clear targets for progression
- to focus staff skills and energy on students that have the capacity and intention to respond
- to improve success rates and value added.

Induction

All students will be informed of the progression principles applicable to their course(s) at the beginning of their programme of study. Each department, during its own induction sessions, will reinforce these general principles with an explanation of any specific criteria applicable to their subject.

1. Progression Principles

For all progression from one College course to another, students are expected to maintain at least satisfactory levels of performance, as would be expected for continuation on any course. Satisfactory levels of performance include attendance, punctuality, work completion, attitude to study and acceptable standards of behaviour. These are set out more precisely below:

- Good attendance is crucial to effective study and successful outcomes in examinations. The College expects all students to meet an attendance target of 95% on all elements of their course, excluding absence authorised by an appropriate member of staff. Students whose attendance is <85% will not be permitted to progress in a given subject unless there are significant mitigating factors
- Attendance at work experience placements is particularly important as absence damages the College's reputation and jeopardises the possibility of the placement being re-used;
- Punctuality at lessons demonstrates a commitment to successful study and students should organise themselves to arrive at lessons on time and prepared to participate in full. Frequent lateness caused by transport problems should be resolved with a student's tutor.
- Satisfactory work completion includes regularly handing in homework on time or showing evidence of study of non-written elements;
- Where students are taking a GCSE as part of their programme of study they should be able to demonstrate that they have made reasonable progress.

Normally a student's Performance Grade in a subject should be greater than the grade achieved on entry.

- A good attitude to study would be evidenced by the following:
 - ❑ appropriate preparation to participate and learn during lessons for example by having the right books and equipment;
 - ❑ a willingness to contribute constructively in lessons;
 - ❑ good concentration and attentiveness during lessons;
 - ❑ an effective system for recording and organising notes and other materials;
 - ❑ a sensible observance of procedure in all practical work;
 - ❑ developing a constructive working relationship with the teacher and other staff;
 - ❑ evidence of independent study and commitment to the subject/course (e.g. independent research or participation in extra-curricular activities).

- Students are expected to behave reasonably and respectfully towards their teachers, College staff and others in their lessons and in the College in general. Unacceptable behaviour in lessons will not be tolerated and students must not therefore:
 - ❑ distract others or interfere with their learning;
 - ❑ use inappropriate language;
 - ❑ challenge the authority of the teacher or behave disrespectfully to them;
 - ❑ commit plagiarism.

Students should be aware that poor performance in one aspect of their programme of study could affect their whole programme. Students will not, therefore, be permitted to progress in cases where:

- a vocational Level 3 student is also taking English or Maths GCSE but has not performed at a level above their entry grade in their GCSE subject
- a student's Summary Assessments indicate that they have not been fully committed to one or more of their subjects

- When deciding on a Yr 2 programme of study students should consider whether they potentially could achieve sufficient qualifications which enable them to progress to employment or further and higher education routes.

2. Progression Procedures

a) Students on level 2 programmes

- (i) Students enrolled on Level 2 programmes should complete an electronic application and follow a similar admissions process to students applying to the College for the first time and, therefore, be subject to the same subject specific entry requirements.
- (ii) In addition to the general principles for progression set out above students should attend a Careers Interview to enable them to seek advice about the suitability of progressing to a Level 3 programme.
- (iii) Particular attention must be paid to the importance of meeting the attendance target of 95% on all elements of their course. Students whose attendance falls below 85% should not be permitted to progress unless there are significant mitigating factors.
- (iv) Students must attend July Induction and Course Confirmation in August.

- (v) It is not normally appropriate for students completing a Level 2 Vocational course to progress to 3 or 4 A levels as it would be exceptional for the skills to transfer effectively to this programme.
- (vi) Students enrolled on L2 programmes will not be permitted to repeat another L2 programme unless there are significant mitigation factors.

b) Students on Advanced Level Programmes

- (i) Students progressing from the first to the second year of an A level must achieve at least a E grade in the AS exam for the subjects they wish to continue with in the second year, unless there are exceptional reasons why they have not done so. These might include ill health, problematic domestic circumstances or other reasons which from time to time arise and which will be considered at the discretion of the Head of Year. Where the above conditions have not been met the support of the department would be necessary to allow progression in that subject.
- (ii) All students expecting to progress to the second year of their A level course should also meet reasonable requirements for attendance, punctuality, coursework and assignment completion and behaviour. Students are expected to achieve attendance of 95% on all elements of their course. Good attendance during the three week period immediately following the end of examination leave is regarded as being particularly important. Similarly students who have repeated poor punctuality may not be permitted to progress.
- (iii) Students are expected to maintain an appropriate full-time programme of study. If they fail to do so they will not be permitted to progress.

c) Students on Advanced Level Vocational Programmes: Progression to the Second Year

- (i) Students completing the first year of a vocational Level 3 course and expecting to begin the second year must satisfactorily complete the assignments set by the specified date (normally in June) in the first year before they do so.
- (ii) All Vocational students should also meet the same previously stated requirements for attendance, punctuality, assignment completion and behaviour to demonstrate their commitment to second year study.
- (iii) Students are expected to maintain an appropriate full-time programme of study. If they fail to do so they will not be permitted to progress.

d) Students Returning for a Third Year of Advanced Level Study having already completed an A level Course

Students will not normally be permitted to return for a third year unless there are significant mitigating factors, such as poor health or caring responsibilities which have made it difficult for them to fully commit to their studies the previous year. Such cases will only be considered if it is agreed that the student has the academic potential and motivation to achieve at a higher level than previously and has the support of the departments involved.

e) **Students who re-apply having left College during their First Year of Advanced Level Study**

All students in this category, whether their studies were at A level or on a vocational course, must apply anew to the College and be interviewed by their former Head of Year who in turn will discuss the re-application with the Heads of Department involved. At Induction these students should consult with those Heads of Department or subject leaders who were responsible for them in the past and would be responsible for the subjects to be re-started.

This consultation is intended to establish the suitability of the student for the course and the conditions for progression about which the Tutor and Head of Year will be informed. If an appropriate full-time programme of study is not agreed with the Head of Year the student concerned will not be successful in their application to re-join the College.

Students would not normally be permitted to return to College unless they have shown a reasonable level of commitment to their previous programme and evidenced in their Summary Assessments.

3. Reasons for Refusal of Progression

a) **Level 2 students**

Progression to level 3 might be refused for reasons which include:

- A past record that implies the applicant is unlikely to benefit from the courses or educational experience on offer and where there is little other evidence that the applicant would be likely to benefit.
- Students with special needs where reasonable adjustments would not be sufficient to enable effective completion of the chosen course.
- Students whose qualifications do not permit them access to a full-time programme.
- Students whose presence at the College has been demonstrated to pose a risk to others, to themselves or to College property.

Heads of Year will write to all students who have not submitted an application to progress to a level 3 programme to ensure that no misunderstandings exist and explaining what they should do if they have changed their mind and now wish to apply.

4. Appeals Against Refusal to Progress

a) **From a Level 2 to a Level 3 Programme of study**

- Heads of Year will write to all students whose application to progress to a level 3 programme has not been successful. The letter will give an explanation of the reasons why a student's application has not been successful including notification of the right of appeal. All appeals against refusal of progression to Level 3 should be made in writing giving grounds for the appeal.
- A request in writing within ten working days of the College's notification of refusal must be received by the Principal, from the student if over 19 years and from the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a student if under 19 years.
- The appeal will be determined by the Principal whose decision will be final.

b) From Level 3 year 1 to year 2

Where a Head of Year believes that a student should not progress in one or more subjects the student will be asked to attend a meeting with the Head of Year. Parents/guardians will also be given the opportunity to attend and the student/Parent/Guardian will be given the opportunity to state their case. The Head of Year will confirm the decision in writing within 5 working days.

Students who wish to appeal against a progression decision should make a request in writing within 5 working days of the College's notification that they will not be allowed to progress with a course or programme of their choice, stating the reasons for their appeal.

Written confirmation of the decision not to allow a student to progress will contain notification of the right of appeal. A request in writing within ten working days of the College's notification of exclusion must be received by the Clerk to the Governing Body, from the student if over 19 years or from the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student if under 19 years, for an appeal to be heard.

This written request must state:

- (i) The ground(s) for the appeal;
 - Failure to follow college procedure, or
 - Inappropriate sanction, or
 - Other circumstances, and
- (ii) The reasons for the appeal; and
- (iii) The remedy sought.

In the case of an appeal against the decision not to allow a student to progress the Student Exclusion and Appeal Panel will consist of two governors (if possible drawn from the membership of the Resources Committee) and the Chair of the Student Exclusion Appeal Panel.

The date set for the appeal hearing will be notified to the student, and his/her parents/guardians if under the age of 19 years, and they will have a right of attendance to express their views.

The decision of the Appeal Panel will be final.

A successful appeal against the decision not to allow a student to progress may result in the reinstatement of the student or changes to the terms of progression.

5. Complaints to the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)

Following an unsuccessful appeal against exclusion or suspension a student may make a complaint to the ESFA against the College. Any such complaint is not a further stage of appeal but an enquiry to determine whether the College has correctly followed its own procedures.

The College will advise an excluded student of this complaint procedure at the same time as they are notified that their appeal has been unsuccessful.

6. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Management Team in conjunction with the Heads of Year.